



**Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations**

# **The farm business school**

**One-day  
orientation programme**

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**Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations**

# **The farm business school**

## **One-day orientation programme**

**An introduction for policy-makers  
and programme managers to the concept  
of the farm business school  
and its application as part of a  
broad-based capacity development programme  
aimed at enhancing the business skills  
of advisory service providers and farmers**

**by  
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and  
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## Preface

Before embarking on the Farm Business School (FBS) programme it is important for policy makers and programme managers responsible for the delivery of extension and rural advisory services to be sensitized on the concept and made aware of the length, duration and resources that will be required to implement the programme successfully.

Given the time constraints on senior management, a short one-day or half-day session should suffice. The orientation outlines the concept of the farm business school, the approach to learning and the way the training programme can be designed, organized, implemented and conducted.

The programme addresses: What is an FBS? What is the FBS approach? How a FBS is organized and more specifically covers the following topics:

- Introduction to the business school.
- What is a farm business school?
- Who should establish a school?
- The approach to learning.
- Preparation for a school.
- The implementation of a farm business school.

This orientation is a vital stage in a process. It enables the decision-makers to determine the best way to design the FBS first as a pilot project and then scaled-up and institutionalized as part of a national extension programme. The orientation sets the scope, pace and focus of the programme - all critical aspects needing to be clarified at the start of the FBS to ensure it is well-planned and resourced to achieve its key objective of strengthening the capacity of small-scale farmers by helping them acquire the knowledge and skills needed to engage in profitable farming.



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Session 1  
**INTRODUCTION**  
**TO THE FARM BUSINESS SCHOOL**



## 1. Background

Welcome the participants to the orientation and, using the information set out below, give a brief introduction to the farm business school.

### PowerPoint Series 1



Farm business school (FBS)

A unique opportunity to engage farmers in developing capacity for running profitable market-oriented farm businesses

A brief orientation

0

### (Initiate the introduction with Slide 0)

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has been working in various parts of the world to develop programmes to help farmers cope with and, preferably, benefit from the changes taking place internationally in farming. Many farmers want to increase income by taking advantage of market opportunities, but often do not have the knowledge needed to compete in this new environment. Farm business management skills and knowledge are needed to effectively respond to present day farming challenges. Farm management advice helps farmers to make the right choice between crop enterprises according to individual levels of financial, labour and land endowments and at their level of risk adversity.

In response to these changes FAO has developed a number of specialized training manuals in market-oriented farm business management. One of them is a set of training programmes for extension workers to help increase their farm management skills so they, in turn, can assist farmers. Training is built around the concept of a Farm Business School (FBS) where farmers work together to learn about, and try out, business management ideas that will improve the way their farm businesses work.

### Key points to cover

1. Changes in the world of farming.
2. What is a farm business school?
3. The FBS approach to learning.
4. The FBS curriculum.
5. Who should establish an FBS?
6. How is a FBS system set up and maintained?

1

### (Slide 1)

The training programme has been crafted as a manual that extension workers can use to engage farmers in learning about farm business management. The aim is to build farmer capacity in entrepreneurial and management skills using a 'learning-by-doing' approach.

The FBS concept operates at village level. It enables farmers to learn and improve their knowledge, change their attitudes and enhance their skills toward improved farm profitability - while working on their own farms. Extension officers and selected farmers are trained as facilitators. They organize seasonal training programmes, where farmers work in small groups at their own agreed time and duration.

The materials for the farm business school are specially designed to work with limited resources. Participants need to be basically literate and numerate, but they need not have had any significant formal education. The manuals provide step-by-step guidelines that take the facilitator and the farmers through the basics of farm business management - following the production patterns of their own particular farms.

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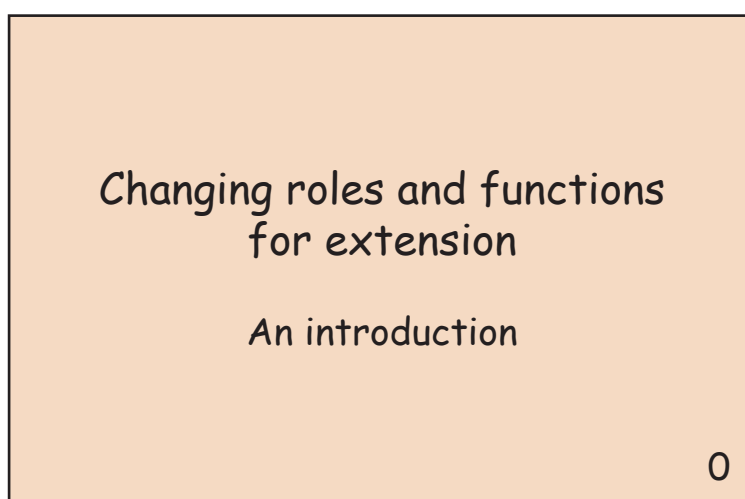
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## 2. Exploring the changes facing extension

For this segment it is suggested that you refer to the diagram showing 'The range of work of a farm business management extension worker' (Slide 17). You may want to print a copy to distribute to the participants.

### PowerPoint Series 2



**(Initiate this segment with Slide 0)**

The narratives following have been prepared to accompany the slide presentation.

#### **(Slide 1)**

In response to the increasing globalization of national and international agricultural systems, extension services in many countries will need to be adapted to ensure that the farmers in their respective countries are able to cope with and hopefully benefit from the forces of globalization. This is particularly important in developing countries because small- and medium-scale agriculture are negatively affected by globalization as it advances. In many countries we are seeing extension services shrinking due to budgetary constraints and to lack of clarity about their role.

#### **(Slide 2)**

Part of globalization has been that international corporations have begun to be major players in developing and disseminating agricultural technologies into developing countries - a role that was traditionally played by Public Sector (Government) Extension Services.

**(Slide 3)**

Another part of globalization is that food production is no longer exclusively a national priority - food production and food security are international issues. So it is vital that the small-scale farmers in developing countries are not swept aside by this reality, but become positioned to participate in it and benefit from it.

**(Slide 4)**

There is increasing volatility in the supply of basic foods; sometimes there is a surplus and sometimes a shortfall. Farmers in so-called developed countries have orientated themselves towards profit-making whether their crops go to food or are converted to other products such as ethanol. In the face of all this, farmers in many countries have moved away from their traditional production structures. Some have opted for higher value crops and products; some have supplemented their production with off-farm work or even abandoned farming entirely.

**(Slide 5)**

In effect, farmers have begun to see the value of market-orientated farming, but often lack the skills and networks needed to engage effectively.

**(Slide 6)**

Similarly, extension services, with their traditional approaches and national food security framework, are also often ill equipped to support farmers in meeting these challenges.

**(Slide 7)**

Extension services have to evolve and adapt along a number of lines if they are to help farmers to keep pace with the worldwide changes and to benefit from them. These include the following:

**(Slide 8)**

Helping farmers to organize or reorganize at the individual farm level and collectively to capitalize on efficiencies for input supply, production and marketing and value adding.

**(Slide 9)**

Shift focus from production extension to farm management extension focused on profitability.

**(Slide 10)**

Shift extension services to actively support market-orientated farming including appropriate training/retraining, structuring, and extension delivery policy.

**(Slide 11)**

Shift focus from increasing staple foods to higher value products.

**(Slide 12)**

Adopt a learning framework for extension that builds the capacity of the farmer to manage increasingly complex farm management opportunities and challenges.

**(Slide 13)**

The farm business school process, with the 'FBS Handbook' and the 'Training exercises' manual can contribute to this evolution of extension services by providing a practical guide to facilitate the positioning of extension workers and extension services to where they can provide support to farmers who are entering or expanding into market-orientated farming.

**(Slide 14)**

We will now review the role of the extension worker in farm business management. Explain the following:

In order for smaller-scale farmers to participate in and benefit from the demands and opportunities presented by the globalization processes, they will need relevant farm management information and advice. They will need information on what to produce and sell, how to sell it, where to sell it and to whom, and what inputs to buy and from whom. In short, they will need advice on production and market opportunities.

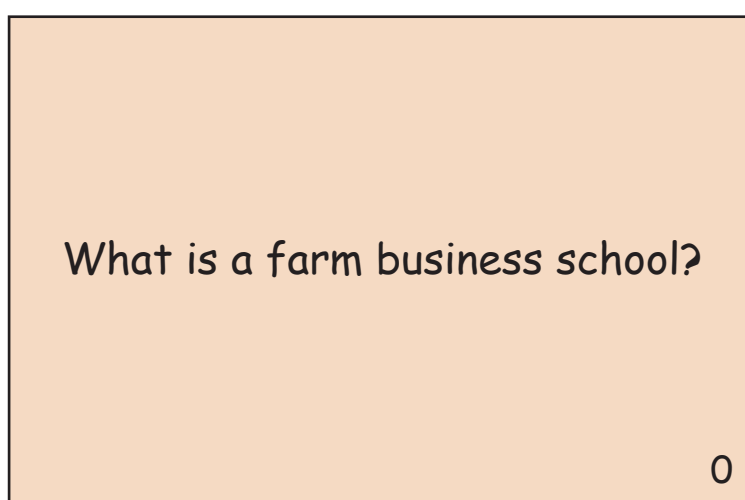




### 3. Introduction to the farm business school

Continue with the narrative and slide presentation.

#### PowerPoint Series 3



**(Initiate this segment with Slide 0)**

#### **(Slide 1)**

The Farm Business School (FBS) is a new idea. The purpose is to work with farmers to help them build knowledge and skills to make their farms more profitable. They will do this by learning about business. And they will do this where they live. This programme takes the school to the farmers.

#### **(Slide 2)**

The aim of the FBS is to develop capacity and skills in farm business management among smallholder farmers and support the transition towards market-oriented farming. The concept of the farm business school was inspired by Farmer Field Schools (FFS) a concept developed by FAO and which is now being used effectively in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

#### **(Slide 3)**

The FBS is a 'curriculum-based' approach to extension that aims at developing the entrepreneurial skills and competencies of farmers. As an extension approach, the FBS aims at strengthening farmers' knowledge and skills through 'learning-by-doing'.

**(Slide 4)**

The objective of the FBS is to help farmers learn how to make their farming enterprises and overall farm operations profitable and able to respond to market demands.

**(Slide 5)**

It enables farmers to learn and improve their knowledge, change their attitudes and enhance their skills needed for farm commercialization - while working on their own farms.

**(Slide 6)**

The FBS is based on four fundamental principles:

i) Facilitation and 'not' teaching. Farmers learn by working together in meetings. They are largely responsible for their own learning. The farm business management extension worker is the facilitator and is there to ensure the smooth running of the FBS and ensure that all materials and activities are covered.

ii) Learning-by-doing. Learning is conducted through discussion, practice and reflection with an emphasis given to practical aspects of instruction that can be applied on farmers' own farms.

iii) Interactive and responsive. The course consists of a series of structured exercises prepared largely as reference materials. However, it is expected to be used flexibly and in response to the demand of the participants.

iv) Season-long approach. The programme is designed so that it can extend over an entire season so that learning is synchronized with different stages in the production cycle, with the length differing according to the farm enterprises selected. It can also be taught in other formats such as short courses and concentrated training courses.

**(Slide 7)**

The FBS process is guided by a set of training materials prepared for facilitators and farmers. There is also an organizational component where farmers are formed into small groups to build collectively their

capacity to produce for the market and respond to market demands with the aim of generating profits.

**(Slide 8)**

Extension workers serving as facilitators are supported by back-up teams of specialists to coach and mentor them in assisting farmers to manage their farms as a business.

**(Slide 9)**

The farm business school takes participants through a series of practical applications in which they learn about farm business management concepts, tools and practices, based on their local knowledge and skills. The focus of the approach is to build on what farmers and extension workers know and to add value to this knowledge.

**(Slide 10)**

When the programme is offered on a seasonal basis, participants apply what they have learned in the FBS meetings to their farming businesses and bring what they have learned back to the school to share and compare results.

**(Slide 11)**

The FBS aims at setting up schools at community level, where farmers can work in small groups at their own pace and at an agreed time and duration. The process is facilitated by an extension worker. The approach has the flexibility to fit into current farming operations and follows local necessities and needs.

**(Slide 12)**

The farm business school has six main characteristics:

- It focuses on content by providing practical exercises to facilitate learning of specific knowledge and skills - exercises can be organized into unique learning programmes;
- It is based on experiential learning;
- It involves facilitated farmer learning - led by a trained extension worker.

**(Slide 13)**

The farm business school has six main characteristics:

- It is designed around selected farm enterprise that can be produced locally;
- It covers the production cycle - from planning to marketing;
- Learning is linked to real farm settings to reinforce learning and to deliver more immediate impact.

**(Slide 14)**

The FBS is a:

- Programme of learning designed to help small holder farmers in producing for the market making their farms work profitably.

**(Slide 15)**

The FBS is a:

- Venue that brings farmers together to carry out collective and collaborative action to address business and marketing problems and opportunities.
- Forum for sharing knowledge between farmers through discussion, practical exercises and self-study.

**(Slide 16)**

The FBS is not:

- Not intended to teach farmers how to produce certain crops or manage livestock. It is assumed that they will already have this knowledge or can acquire it through other sources.
- Not a set of lectures. Exchanges of information and knowledge are facilitated through the meetings/sessions, with observations, dialogues, and discussions.

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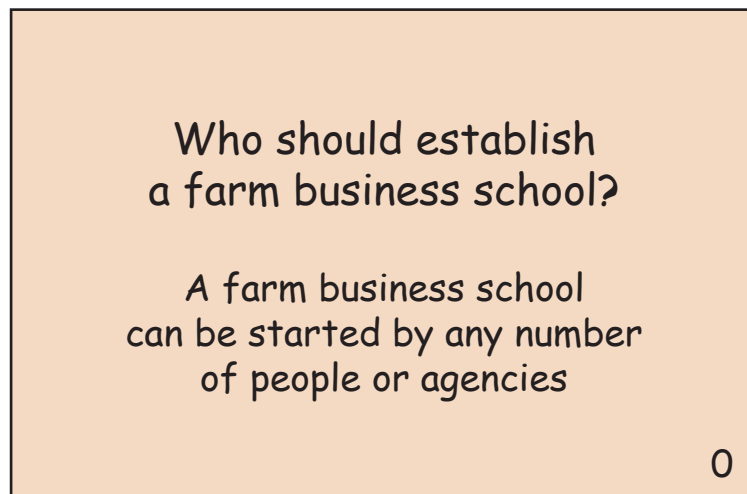
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#### 4. Who should establish a farm business school?

Continue with the narrative and slide presentation.

##### PowerPoint Series 4



**(Initiate this segment with Slide 0)**

**(Slide 1)**

There are no restrictions on or requirements governing who should establish a farm business school.

**(Slide 2)**

A farm business school can be started by any number of people or agencies including public sector extension services, NGOs, commodity groups with advisory services, farmers associations and cooperatives, and colleges and universities.

**(Slide 3)**

Whoever establishes an FBS will need to be able to provide the necessary back-up teams of specialists to coach and mentor the trainers.

**(Slide 4)**

A farm business school is not a once-off training event; it should be part of an extended strategy to build farm business capacity among farmers.

**(Slide 5)**

Whoever establishes an FBS will need to have the capacity to meet the standards set by the approach to learning used by the process.

**(Slide 6)**

They will also need to be able to carry out the following tasks:

- Create awareness and identify and select potential participants.
- Design and organize a number of farm level training programmes among interested farmers. (Training programmes will each be held at a specific location and will run for a whole season.)
- Recruit and train farmers as FBS facilitators to help you with subsequent rounds of farmer training.

**(Slide 7)**

They will also need to be able to carry out the following tasks:

- Mentor farmer groups and give them back-up support as and when needed.
- Keep in touch with other FBS facilitators to collectively identify opportunities for further training as well as reflect on lessons learned and areas of improvement for the next FBS rollout.

**Turn off or cover the projector**

**In closing Session 1 explain that it will be important for the host organization to make an objective assessment of its capacity to set up and maintain an FBS system.**

**Ask if there are any questions. Discuss.**

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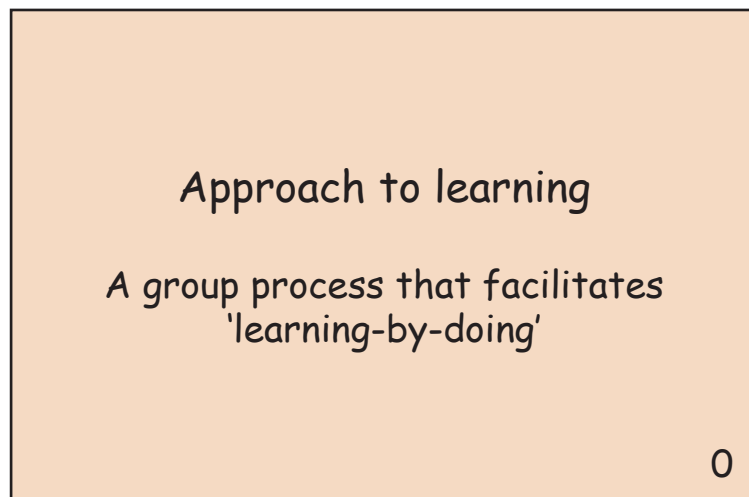
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Session 2  
**THE TRAINING PROGRAMME  
AND CURRICULAE**

## 5. The approach to learning

Continue the narrative and the slide presentation.

### PowerPoint Series 5



**(Initiate this segment with Slide 0)**

#### **(Slide 1)**

The learning process of the farm business school follows the Participatory Mutual Training and Learning Approach (PMTLA).

#### **(Slide 2)**

The PMTLA is a group process that facilitates training and learning among adults. The participants 'learn-by-doing' and through sharing their knowledge and experiences.

#### **(Slide 3)**

The process involves the participation of people with common interest and purpose. There are no instructors or teachers; only facilitators. The participants mainly learn from each other.

#### **(Slide 4)**

Learning moves from the known to the unknown, from the easy to the difficult and from the simple to complex. It is guided by a curriculum that facilitates learning.



**(Slide 5)**

The training and learning is organized and structured. The FBS requires a facilitator and structured exercises to guide and support the group training and learning process.

**(Slide 6)**

Through the process, the participants generate new practical knowledge and ideas. They learn what to do, how to do it, the cost involved, the potential problems to be confronted and the benefits it will bring.

**(Slide 7)**

The PMTLA approach enables the participants to learn from each other.

**(Slide 8)**

The approach is based on three principles:

- Reflection and sharing;
- Generating new knowledge;
- Motivating innovation and creativity.

**(Slide 9)**

Reflection and sharing. The participants in the training reflect on the topic, share experience, knowledge and understanding on the subject. It begins with what the participants know.

**(Slide 10)**

Generating new knowledge. Here new knowledge is created based on existing capacity plus new concepts derived from the FBS

**(Slide 11)**

Motivating innovation and creativity. The new knowledge and insights helps the participants to innovate, to develop new ideas from old ones and to create completely new ideas from the insights gained.

**(Slide 12)**

The FBS is different from conventional farm management approaches, which are methods/tool based and dependent on the availability of data.

**(Slide 13)**

The approach of the farm business school is 'entrepreneurial'. It relies on simpler decision support tools, checklists and strategic questions. It is based on the real experiences of the participants on their own farms.

**(Slide 14)**

Discussion, practical exercises and self-study enable farmer participants to share ideas, offer advice, experiment and formulate opinions on whether a practice will work on their farm and for their farm.

**(Slide 15)**

The learning generated is consolidated and reinforced through action that is, through implementing what they have learned on their own farms.

**(Slide 16)**

Discuss the learning cycle.

**(Slide 17)**

This brings-up the following considerations:

- Rather than solving business problems for farmers, farmers develop the knowledge and skills necessary to dig into the problems they face - to understand them and their causes.

**(Slide 18)**

This brings-up the following considerations:

- The programme actively works to reduce the tendency to create dependency on external sources of expertise and where such resources are needed, to be able to engage with them wisely and confidently.

**(Slide 19)**

This brings-up the following considerations:

- To strengthen learning, the programme and the way it is facilitated includes simple exploratory exercises that are relevant to the participants' own farms and with which the group can readily engage in an action orientated way.

**(Slide 20)**

This brings-up the following considerations:

- Knowledge and skills are not learned in an abstract way. The programme fosters the use of knowledge and skills gained to make farm-specific business management decisions instead of adopting generic answers and recommendations developed remotely by 'specialists' not directly affected by the outcomes of the decisions made.

**(Slide 21)**

This brings-up the following considerations:

- The programme recognizes that decision-making processes in a farm business - even a small-scale farm business - are complex and require an iterative approach to make.

**(Slide 22)**

This brings-up the following considerations:

- Sharing learning with other farmers after completing the programme is encouraged as a means of developing, extending and adapting the acquired knowledge and skills among neighbouring farmers and farming communities

**(Slide 23)**

This brings-up the following considerations:

- To foster continuous learning, the programme will initiate the establishment of networks that the farmers will maintain and extend to facilitate reflexive learning about particular farm business

problems and opportunities and ways to address them, through personal observation, meaningful conversation and participation in real-world 'learning-by-doing' exercises.

**(Slide 24)**

This brings-up the following considerations:

- Participating farmers will be expected and encouraged to draw on their own experience and observations, to learn, to assist learning by other farmers and to make real decisions relevant to their own businesses.

**(Slide 25)**

The approach facilitates the following learning outcomes among the participants:

- Heightened awareness, knowledge and skills on various aspects of farm business management;
- Sharpened inter-personal and communication skills;
- Critical thinking about the knowledge and skills acquired and their application in a farm business.

**(Slide 26)**

The approach facilitates the following learning outcomes among the participants:

- A change in attitude and behaviour supporting positive action and continuous reflection-driven learning;
- Better performance and increased productivity;
- A stronger team focus and improved capacity for group cooperation and collaboration among colleagues and stakeholders in the value chain.

**(Slide 27)**

It also helps to strengthen generic skills, especially:

- Observation skills;
- Social and behavioural skills;
- Communication skills;
- Analytical skills;
- Decision-making skills.

**(Slide 28)**

To be fully successful:

- The approach must be adapted and linked to the actual farming activities of the participants. Any theoretical learning is immediately reinforced by application and practice.

**(Slide 29)**

To be fully successful:

- The participants must be committed to walking the path of transformation and change leading to profit- and market-orientated farming.

**(Slide 30)**

The FBS has three critical outcomes:

- Farmers will make decisions about their farm businesses that are based on their own experiences, observations and analyses to increasingly improve the sustainability of their farms; and will be able to continue making such decisions post-training.

**(Slide 31)**

The FBS has three critical outcomes:

- It is expected that farmers will pass on the knowledge and skills they have learned to others.

**(Slide 32)**

The FBS has three critical outcomes:

- Some of the participating farmers may become facilitators themselves. The more promising farmers graduating from the FBS can be trained to serve as trainers for other farmer groups.

**Turn off or cover the projector.**

**Ask if there are any questions. Encourage discussion.**

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## 6. The training programme

Before holding this segment, the facilitator should make a summary of each of the five main parts of the training programme (See Section 1, Item 1.6 in the FBS Handbook).

(Note to the facilitator: There are no slides for this segment. PowerPoint Series 6 is to be used only in the Seven-day programme.)

This segment is based on a review of the entire farm business school training programme. Each participant should have a copy of the 'FBS Handbook' and the 'Training exercises' manual. Walk the participants through the 'Contents' of the handbook to familiarize them with the scope of the programme and with the FBS process. When you reach the five main parts in Section 1, Item 1.6, be sure to emphasize that the entire programme is based on this structure.

1. Ask the participants to turn to the handbook and read through the 'Contents'. Discuss the headings with them section-by-section so they become familiar with the general outline of the programme. Answer any questions they may have.

Present the 5-part summary that you prepared earlier

2. Again direct the attention of the participants to Item 1.6 of the handbook where it is recommended that the farm business school training programme be divided into the following five parts:

Part 1 - Preparing the FBS;

Part 2 - Preparing to farm as a business;

Part 3 - Planning the farm business,

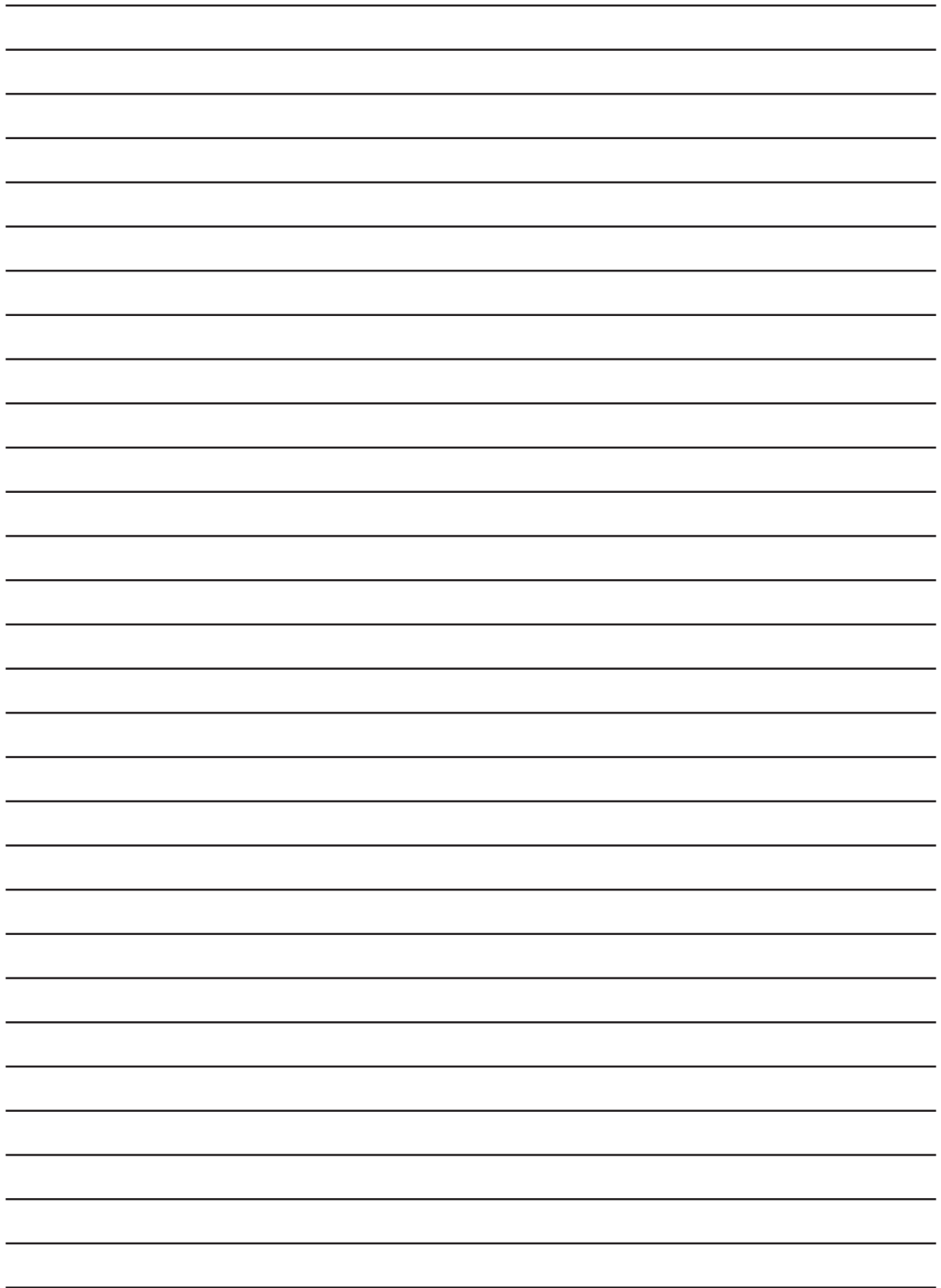
Part 4 - Implementing a farm business plan;

Part 5 - Reflection and evaluation.

3. Begin by discussing the first part. Answer any questions.

4. Continue part-by-part until finished.







Session 3  
**ESTABLISHING, IMPLEMENTING,  
MONITORING, EVALUATING**

## 7. Establishing a farm business school

Resume the narrative and the slide presentation.

### PowerPoint Series 7



**(Initiate this segment with Slide 0)**

**(Slide 1)**

Farm business school models:

- There are four contexts in which an FBS is likely to be set up. The host agency needs to determine which is the most relevant model and then uniquely plan the FBS.

**(Slide 2)**

Scenario 1. Participating farmers have not previously been set up as a group and have no knowledge of which enterprise(s) to work on.

**(Slide 3)**

Scenario 2. Participating farmers have not been set up as a group but members know which enterprise(s) to focus attention on.

**(Slide 4)**

Scenario 3. Participating farmers have already been set up as a group but have no knowledge of which enterprise (s) to work on.

**(Slide 5)**

Scenario 4. Participating farmers have previously been set up as a group and have already chosen an enterprise(s).

**(Slide 6)**

In all four cases there are two situations:

- The participating farmers have basic farm business management skills;
- The participating farmers have no previous business/farm business management exposure.

**(Slide 7)**

Developing a farm business school process:

- After orientation and training, the FBS facilitator will want to get started as quickly as possible.

**(Slide 8)**

There are four basic stages in the FBS process:

- Creating interest and receptivity. Where potential participants are identified.
- Preparations. Where the details of the specific (e.g. venue, materials, logistics) FBS are settled.
- Implementing. Where the FBS is run with a specific group of farmers.
- Post-Implementation. Where the facilitator follows up with the farmers and assists them in applying what they have learned.

**(Slide 9)**

Resource requirements for running the FBS are few.

- White board and markers or chalk board and chalk;
- Large sheets of paper;
- Masking tape;
- Marking pens;
- Pencils;
- Loose lined and unlined paper.

**(Slide 10)**

## Resource requirements:

- Each participant will need copies of parts of 'The handbook' or the 'Training exercises' manual. Each facilitator will need to decide which parts of the each will be needed to be copied.

**(Slide 11)**

## Resource requirements:

- It is best if the farmers themselves are involved and contribute to organizing their farm business school and in covering some of the meeting costs, such as food.

**(Slide 12)**

## Establishing an FBS

- Facilitators will need adequate back up, support and easy access to resources.

**(Slide 13)**

## Establishing an FBS

- Organizing agencies should consider a formal process of accompaniment that in effect 'walks with facilitators' as they build their capacity to run FBS programmes.

**(Slide 14)**

## Establishing an FBS

- Refresher courses and reflection meetings should be held at regular intervals (e.g. every 3-6 months) where experience from the field can be shared and the facilitators and organisers can learn together how to improve the FBS.

**Ask if there are any questions.  
Encourage discussion.**

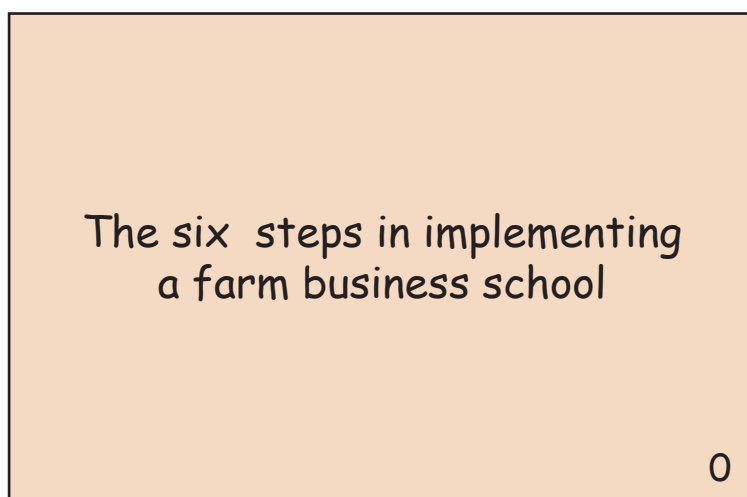
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## 8. Implementing a farm business school

Continue with the narrative and the slide presentation.

### PowerPoint Series 8



**(Initiate this segment with Slide 0)**

This session will briefly outline the process of implementing an FBS once it has been agreed to establish the programme in a country or region.

**(Slide 1)**

Implementing a FBS

Implementing a FBS involves 6 steps:

1. Establish a Core Team of Trainers.
2. Adapt the training materials.
3. Identify, select and train facilitator.

**(Slide 2)**

Implementing an FBS

4. Design and organize the first round of farm-level training.
5. Train farmers who have participated in the FBS as facilitators.
6. Design and organize the second round of farm-level training.

**(Slide 3)**

## Implementing an FBS

This is a diagram outlining the process for implementing an FBS. We will go through these briefly, one-by-one.

**(Slide 4)**

## 1. Establish a Core Team of Trainers (CTT)

The first step in implementing an FBS is to establish a core team of trainers. To do this it is necessary to identify appropriate people to serve in this capacity. They can come from government, NGOs and the private sector. They should have previous experience in farm business management and experiential methods of farmer-to-farmer learning. And, they should 'not need to be trained as trainers'.

**(Slide 5)**

## 2. Adapt the training materials

The CTT will need to review the training materials and adapt them to the local context. They will need to consider levels of literacy and language requirements of the participating farmers. The materials will need to be adapted according to farmers' literacy levels. Even if English is used, the materials should be reviewed. If necessary, they will need to translate materials into the local language or dialect. They will also need to decide on whether they should use number or symbol-based calculations in the various exercises.

**(Slide 6)**

## 3. Identify, select and train facilitators

Once the CTT have been familiarized with the FBS materials and the materials have been adapted to local conditions, the next step is to identify, select and train FBS facilitators. To do this the organizers must first determine the method and process to be used to identify and select FBS facilitators to be trained by the core team.

FBS facilitators could be drawn from the public sector extension service vice, NGOs, the private sector and lead farmers. Consideration should also be given to whether male or female

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facilitators are needed. Beyond this, the FBS materials provide a list of qualities to look for in people to appoint as facilitator's - key among these is the ability to work comfortably with farmers, to listen and to be able to adapt to circumstances on the ground.

**(Slide 7)**

3. Identify, select and train facilitators

After selecting potential facilitators, the next step is to train them in the FBS materials. Training is conducted using the actual materials of the programme itself (the same materials that will be used with the farmers). The training covers:

- The FBS concept;
- School organization;
- The content of the modules and sessions;
- Designing a training programme.

**(Slide 8)**

4. Design and organize the first round of farm-level training

After completing their training, FBS Facilitators will design and organize a number of farm level training programmes among interested farmers as their first round of FBS training. To do this they will have to give careful consideration when selecting farmers so that they start with a group that is keen and able.

**(Slide 9)**

4. Design and organize the first round of farm-level training

The primary outcome of the first round of FBS programmes is to train an initial cadre of farmers who are able to successfully implement the concepts and skills learned in the FBS on their own farms. And from these to identify farmers who can be trained as FBS facilitators. This is a key function to build training capacity for farmer-to-farmer training.

**(Slide 10)**

5. Train farmers who have participated in the FBS as facilitators

Once suitable farmers have been identified, they need to be trained as FBS facilitators. Training follows the FBS curriculum again, but







LEVEL OF COMPETENCE IN MARKET-ORIENTED FARMING						
Level of market orientation	Indicator	Produces for home consumption	Produces primarily for home consumption with some sales at markets	Produces for the market and home consumption	Farms exclusively for market, but still very inexperienced	Experienced farming exclusively for the market
Level of Commercialisation (farming system, area cultivated, market orientation)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional land use</li> <li>• No understanding of marketing and its implications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aware of cash crop opportunities</li> <li>• Understanding of how the market works</li> <li>• Aware that it is possible to sell, but market is not priority</li> <li>• Farm is not a business</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing farming system towards market</li> <li>• Considers market first, but still balances decisions with home consumption needs</li> <li>• Beginning to see farm as a business</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farm dominated by cash crops and livestock for the market</li> <li>• Specific market identified before planting.</li> <li>• Takes advantage of seasonal price variations</li> <li>• Farm is a business</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimal cropping pattern</li> <li>• Forward selling contracts</li> <li>• All decisions made exclusively on the basis of the farm as a business</li> </ul>
	Production technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional practices</li> <li>• No working knowledge of alternative production systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic understanding of the economics of different production technologies and farm enterprises but not applied</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applies on a small scale or on an experimental basis, some production technologies based on economic advantages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applies on a larger scale production technologies chosen based on known economic advantages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applies on whole farm production technologies chosen exclusively on known economic advantages.</li> </ul>

## LEVEL OF COMPETENCE IN MARKET-ORIENTED FARMING

Level of market orientation	Indicator	Produces for home consumption	Produces primarily for home consumption with some sales at markets	Produces for the market and home consumption	Farms exclusively for market, but still very inexperienced	Experienced farming exclusively for the market
Value addition/ level of processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traditional processing aimed at preservation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aware of value adding opportunities from processing but continues to focus on preservation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilising processing opportunities provided by third parties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Owns small-scale processing equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Owns large scale processing equipment</li> <li>Has buying contracts with processors</li> </ul>	
Business practices (record keeping, gross margin, physical & financial planning etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No business practices conducted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding that farming can be conducted as a business</li> <li>Keeps some records of stored products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands the importance of keeping records</li> <li>Keeps some income and expenditure records, but the practice is weak</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepares comprehensive records (including physical and financial planning) but with assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepares comprehensive records without assistance</li> </ul>	
Capitalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low, using informal lending sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aware of the need for capital to become more commercially viable, but continues to use informal sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Started to invest in the farm business for commercial benefits but on a small scale</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Larger commercial investments have been made for productive purposes - resulting in increased wealth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working to a longer term investment plan aimed at increasing farm profitability and generating wealth</li> </ul>	

LEVEL OF COMPETENCE IN MARKET-ORIENTED FARMING	
Level of market orientation	Indicator
Produces for home consumption	Produces primarily for home consumption with some sales at markets
Produces for home consumption	Produces for the market and home consumption
Produces for home consumption	Farms exclusively for market, but still very inexperienced
Experienced farming exclusively for the market	
<b>Participation in farm/rural enterprise groups</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
Minimal participation in enterprise specific groups to learn about economic opportunities	Member of an interest group and beginning to experiment with new ideas
Member of an interest group and beginning to experiment with new ideas	Sustained membership for at least one year Regularly experiments with new ideas on a small scale
Adopting the lessons that came out of group membership, but still seeks support and guidance	Key member/ leader in enterprise group Develops and adapts the business enterprise to market changes
Capacity to forge linkages without external support	Advises other farmers on potential linkages
<b>Input-output linkages</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
No understanding of input-output linkages and support services	Member of group(s) taking advantage of linkages Has established a few important linkages (with support)
Member of group(s) taking advantage of linkages	Pro-active member of a group(s) taking advantage of linkages
<b>Use of support services</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
Understands the importance of linkages	Begins exploring possibilities mostly with external encouragement
Begins exploring possibilities mostly with external encouragement	

Session 4  
**CLOSING THE ONE-DAY  
ORIENTATION PROGRAMME**



## 10. The final session

Bring the orientation to a close using the diagram 'Farm business school programme implementation'.

### **Show Slide 3 PowerPoint Series 8**

1. Thank the participants for the interest they have shown in the farm business school and for their attention during the 'One-day orientation programme'.
2. Now that the orientation is about to be concluded it is likely that you as the facilitator would like to make a few closing comments. Perhaps you have found a table or diagram outside the programme that you would like to share with the participants.
3. Often the best way to get things started and to involve those present in a dialogue is to initiate a brief discussion on the programme.
4. Depending on the individual interest(s) of those who have taken part in the presentation you may ask if there are any matters that require clarification.
5. Ask what are their impressions of the farm business school and the FBS process now that they have been fully briefed.
6. And most importantly how do they think they could implement the farm business school and process in the field to the benefit of those involved.

**At the very end of the session  
open the floor to the participants  
to voice their opinions or make a final comment  
if only to say goodbye to their fellow participants.**









For information on FAO's activities  
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Before embarking on the farm business school programme it is important for policy makers and programme managers responsible for the delivery of extension and rural advisory services to be sensitized on the concept and made aware of the length, duration and resources that will be required to implement the programme successfully. This orientation outlines the concept of the farm business school, the approach to learning and the way the training programme can be designed, organized and conducted.