



FARMER FIELD AND BUSINESS SCHOOLS (FFBS) APPROACH IN CASHEW VALUE CHAIN



Introduction

FFBS (Farmer Field and Business Schools) is a participatory extension approach in which farmers are given the opportunity to choose production methods through a discovery-based approach.

Establishment of FFBS

FFBS is established through a participatory process of community mobilization to identify a group of cashew farmers with similar interests in the value chain. FFBS can also be formed from an existing cashew farmer group.

Membership of FFBS

The recommended membership of FFBS is 25-30 members. The reason for this is that during the implementation process every member is allowed to participate.

Steps in FFBS

Step 1: Conduct Ground working Activities

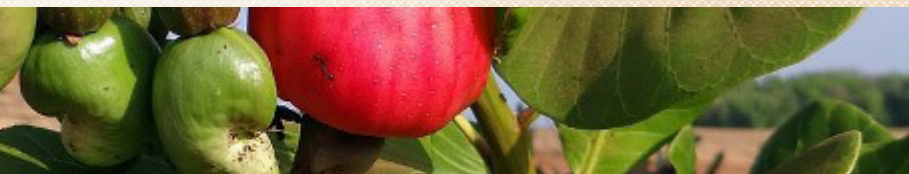
This stage marks the mobilization phase of the FFBS methodology, which involves:

Identifying group facilitators to be trained and community groups to implement the Cashew FFBS.

Step 2: Training of Facilitators:

The facilitators identified during the FFBS groundwork are trained on the following:

- Crop production, protection, and marketing aspects in cashew.
- Effective delivery of these crop production and marketing topics using non-formal education methods.
- Participatory technology development (PTD) on cashew.
- Non-formal education methods, with an emphasis on when, how, and what to use in FFBS.





A session during training of facilitators

Step 3: Establishment and Operation of the FFBS

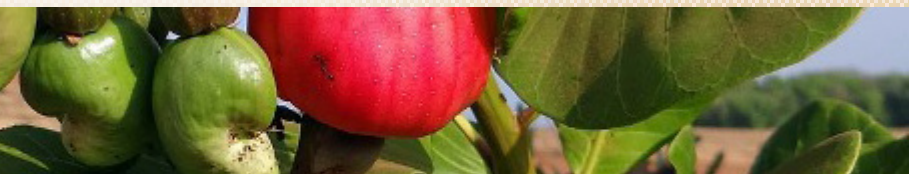
The FFBS is established through a process of identifying and listing the major challenges, which are then ranked using a pairwise ranking procedure as shown below:

List of production problems:

- Low yielding varieties (LYV)
- High incidences of pests (HIP)
- Low soil fertility (LSF)
- Pairwise Ranking Procedure

Each of the problems is listed in a table along the first row and column as shown below. The problems listed are given acronyms for ease of fitting them into the table. Within the table, two problems are compared at a time, and the higher ranking is written.

	LYV	HIP	LSF	Scores	Rank
LYV		LYV	LSF	1	2
HIP			LSF	0	3
LSF				2	1



The scores within the table are counted, resulting in the ranking of the problems. In this example, low soil fertility (LSF) is ranked first, leading followed by low yielding varieties (LYV) and high incidence of pests and diseases (HIP)



FFBS Sub group discussing pairwise ranking

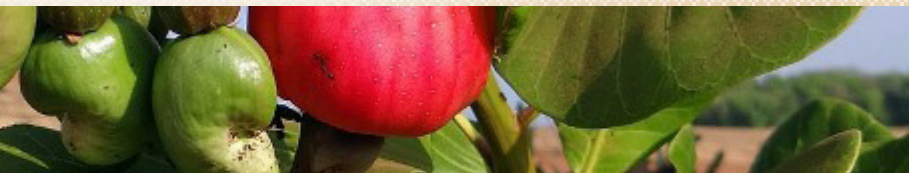
Setting Participatory Development Designs to Address Low Soil Fertility

Participatory technology development is a process of engaging the FFBS to design a learning process around the problem ranked first by identifying opportunities, referred to as treatments that can be used in this area to mitigate the problem.

Suggested Treatments:

Treatment 1: Apply organic manure only (OM).

Treatment 2: Organic manure + recommended planting fertilizer and topdressing (OM+FERT).



Treatment 3: Planting fertilizer and topdressing without manure (FERT).

Treatment 4: Control - neither manure nor fertilizer (ZERO).

The treatments are designed in a block that will be placed on the ground as shown.

Treatment 1 OM	Treatment 2 OM+FERT	Treatment 3 FERT	Treatment 4 Zero
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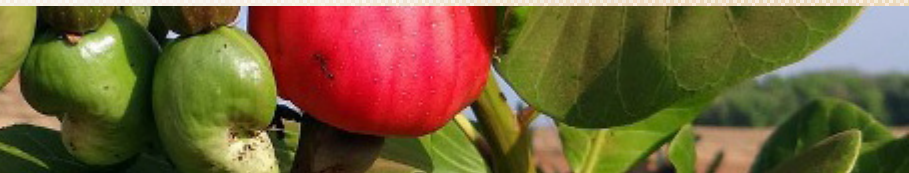


Sub group setting PTD design

AEESA process

AGRO ECOSYSTEMS ANALYSIS (AEESA)

Agro ecosystem analysis is used to measure the performance of



treatments as follows:

AESA PROCESS



Observation of crop performance
crop by measuring parameters



Data collection from



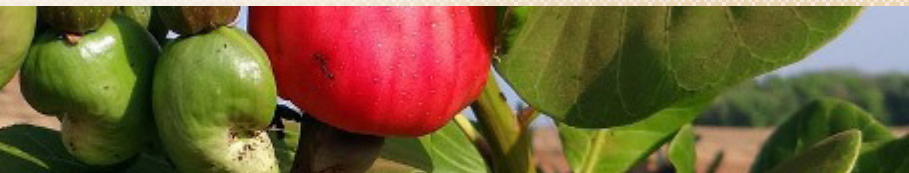
Data Processing analyzing parameters
to plenary members of FFBS



Data presentation

Step 4: Field days

During the period of running the FFBS, field days are organized where the rest of the farming community is invited to share what the group has learned. One or two field days can be conducted per season. During these field days, members of the FFBS act as facilitators.





Field day being facilitated by the FFBS members

Step 5: Graduation

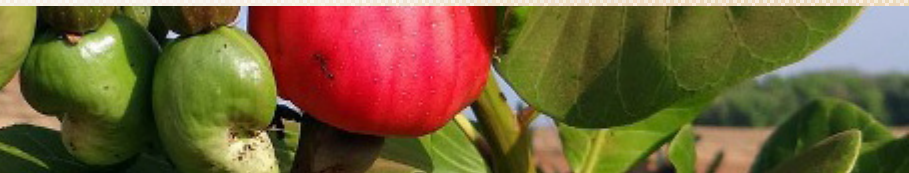
This activity marks the end of the season-long FFBS. The farmers, facilitators, and the coordinating office usually organize it. During this time, farmers are awarded certificates.

Step 6: Farmer Led FFBS

FFBS farmer graduates now have the knowledge and confidence to run their own FFBS.

Step 7: Follow-up by Facilitators

The facilitator occasionally follows up on the schools that have graduated, preferably on a monthly basis. The core facilitators also provide support for ongoing farmer-run FFBS.





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KALRO/NAVCDP/ FFBS / Brochure No.102/2024

