



CHARACTERISTICS OF FARMER FIELD AND BUSINESS SCHOOL (FFBS)



NAVCDP
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAIN
DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Introduction

Farmer Field and Business School (FFBS) is a participatory extension approach, whereby farmers are allowed to choose the methods of production through a discovery-based approach.

Characteristic of the Farmer Field School Approach

1. Farmers “learn- by –doing”

Farmers carry out the various activities related to a particular farming practice. The key aspect is that farmers conduct their field studies. Training is based on comparison studies of different treatments.

2. The field is the learning place

The field serves as the primary learning environment, where all learning activities occur within small sub-groups. Members of FFBS collect data in the field, analyze it, and then make informed decisions based on their data analysis.



Farmers during an FFBS learning session

3. Extension workers are facilitators, not teachers

The role of an extension worker is to facilitate activities, not a conventional teacher.

4. Scientists or subject matter specialists work with farmers

They provide backstopping support to the members of FFBS and in doing so learn to work in a consultative capacity with farmers.

5. The curriculum is integrated.

This includes crop husbandry, ecology, economics, sociology and education to form a holistic approach. Problems confronted in the field are the integrating principle.

If I hear
-I forget
If I see -

6. Training follows the season cycle.

Training is related to the season cycle of practice being investigated. The information inserted in the table below will define the management practice that is required each week and stage.

7. Regular group meetings.

Farmers meet at agreed regular intervals. For perennial crops like pyrethrum, meetings may be at 1 to 2-week intervals during the cropping season. For other management practices, the time between each meeting would depend on the specific activities that will need to be done.

Curriculum development

Crop growth Parameters	Seed	Seedlings	Vegetative	Flower buds	Mature flowers
Weeks after planting					
Appearance					
Susceptibility to pest					
Nutrients needed					
Effects of weeds					
Management needed					
AESA parameters					
Relevant topics					

8. Learning materials are learner-generated.

Farmers generate their learning materials from what they observe in the field trials themselves. These materials are always consistent with local conditions and are less expensive to develop.

9. Group dynamics/team building

Definition of a group

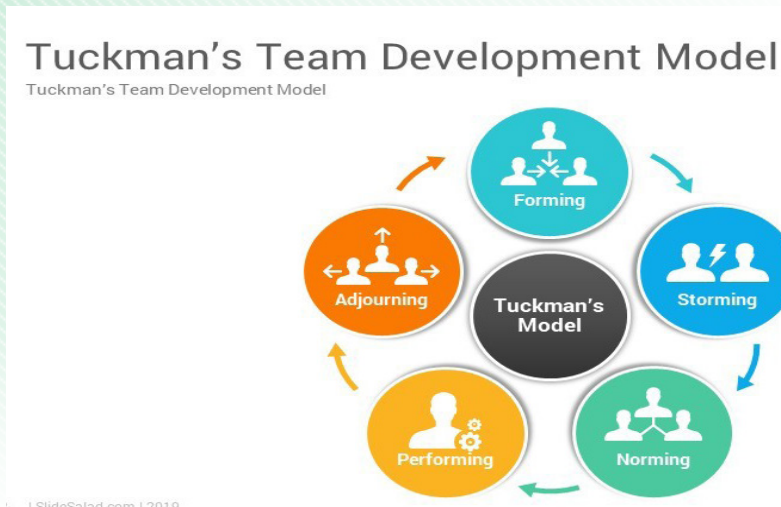
A group is made up of a collection of individuals whose goal is to work together towards achieving defined objectives that individual members would otherwise have difficulty achieving on their own. Normally, an effective group is “greater than the

sum of its parts,” that is, its strength is greater than the total of each individual’s strength added together. So the sum of 1+1+1 is (or should be) more than 3.

Stages of group formation

The Tuckman theory outlines the five stages of group development: forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning. The way the group members address issues during these stages determines if the group will be successful in achieving the assigned tasks or not.

Forming: A group leader must be assigned. The group’s tasks and goals should be clearly defined. The working conditions and role(s) that each



member will play must be well defined. Positive criticism must be offered and information must be shared.

Storming: The leader must ensure that group members' interests correspond to the group's goal. Each member's ideas must be heard and the group's values must be well communicated to them. Group members must be motivated to become successful, conflicts shall be avoided, and attention shall be paid to informal power play.

Norming: The group leader must ensure that each member abides by the set standards and values and encourage relationship formation and interaction between group mates. Motivating them towards success and supporting independence and innovation. This stage is characterized by the recognition of shared expectations and individual

differences.

Performing: This is when the group matures and obtains cohesiveness. In this stage, individuals accept each other and the conflicts are resolved by discussion in the group.

Adjourning: Not all of the group experience this stage as it is related to the disintegration of the group as some groups are not dissolved. Mostly, a group is adjourned because the task is over and the members decide to go their separate ways

10. Market led oriented

The FFBS should be market-oriented. They should therefore elect a team of marketing committee to conduct market surveys and engagement of buyers of the crop on behalf of the FFBS. They also need to aggregate their produce for marketing to



FFBS members' produce loaded to be transported to the market after aggregation

Source: Carolyne Imbwaga

benefit from economies of scale in transportation and value addition.

Marketing tools in FFBS

The marketing concept is introduced at the pre-sowing stage of the season of pyrethrum. It involves the identification of marketing challenges and the strategies the FFBS will employ to overcome the challenges.

The challenges should guide the FFBS members into developing a vision pathway by asking themselves certain questions as guided below;

- Q1 Where are we in pyrethrum VC and where do we want to go in 3-5 years?
- Q2 What changes do we need to make in our production and marketing practices to get to the 3-5-year vision?
- Q3 What activities need to be done in the short, medium and long term?
- Q4 What kind of resources are required to make some of these changes?
- Q5 What are the challenges likely to be faced while making the changes?

Marketing Committee

A marketing committee is formed that will be charged with harmonizing market information and farmer's production levels to develop a process of turning the vision into reality.

Marketing planning

Market planning is at two stages;

Stage one: Estimation of production

The marketing committee works with the FFBS members to estimate the expected production from the amalgamated produce from the farmers. This is done through the use of a checklist.

Stage two: Determining the profitability of the pyrethrum value chain

With the leadership of the marketing committee, the FFBS members are guided to determine the profitability of the enterprise.

Profitability Determination Costs

Item/Activity	Unit	Unit cost	Total cost
Pre-production			
Land rent			
Buy tools and inputs			
Production			
Land preparation			
Planting			
Weeding			
Post-harvest			
Transport			
Value addition			
Marketing			
Transport			
Other expenses			
Market fees			

Profitability Determination of Revenue

	Units of produce	Price per unit	Total income

Market survey

Conducting a market survey

Decide on market survey information that needs to be collected so that the marketing committee can be engaged

to carry out the activity. For contract farming, the marketing committee can engage the buyer or company. Records are crucial in the aggregation of FFBS produced from individual members and a sample table below can be a guideline for this.

Market survey matrix

S/NO	Name of farmer	Village name	Collective name	Sex M/F	Sales record				Name and phone no of buyer
					Sales date	Total harvested	Total sold kgs	Total sales income	
1									
2									
3									
4									



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