TRAINING OF TRAINERS FOR AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION OFFICERS COURSE

Introduction

Training of Trainers for Agricultural Extension Officers is a practical professional development programme designed to strengthen the capacity of agricultural extension officers, agronomists, field trainers, project staff and other agricultural professionals to design and deliver effective, participatory learning programmes for farmers and frontline extension personnel. The programme recognizes that effective agricultural extension is not simply about transferring technical informationit is about facilitating learning, influencing behaviour and supporting farmers to apply improved practices in real production environments. Participants develop the skills to plan and conduct engaging training using adult-learning principles, practical demonstrations, farmer field schools, demonstration plots, coaching, peer learning and season-long extension approaches. The course also equips participants to develop training materials, facilitate field-based learning, assess learning outcomes, provide constructive feedback and mentor fellow extension personnel. Particular emphasis is placed on translating agricultural knowledge into practical, locally relevant and action-oriented learning experiences that can contribute to improved productivity, resilience, innovation and sustainable farming practices.

Course Objectives

- Apply adult learning principles to farmer and extension training
- Plan training around the crop and livestock calendar
- Run demonstration plots and farmer field schools
- Develop practical, visual materials for farmers
- Coach extension officers in field teaching methods
- Support farmer groups and lead farmers
- Assess practice change at farm level
- Report results to ministries, projects and value chain partners

Course Modules

> Module 1: Adult Learning in Extension
- How farmers learn and decide
- Experiential learning in agriculture
- Working with mixed literacy groups
- Gender and youth participation in farming
- Respecting indigenous knowledge

> Module 2: Planning Around the Season
- Mapping training to the crop and livestock calendar
- Timing messages to farm operations
- Season-long versus one-off training
- Planning for weather and market shocks
- Coordinating with input suppliers and buyers

> Module 3: Demonstration Plots and Field Days
- Selecting and preparing demonstration sites
- Comparison plots that show a difference
- Running field days
- Host farmer selection and agreements
- Recording and sharing results

> Module 4: Farmer Field Schools
- Farmer field school methodology
- Agro-ecosystem analysis sessions
- Group formation and facilitation
- Session scheduling across a season
- Graduation and follow-up

> Module 5: Practical Materials for Farmers
- Pictorial guides and posters
- Simple record-keeping tools for farmers
- Radio, SMS and WhatsApp messages
- Adapting materials to local crops and languages
- Testing materials with farmer groups

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> Module 6: Coaching Extension Officers
- Observing an officer in the field
- Feedback after a farmer session
- Building technical confidence
- Peer learning among officers
- Managing large, dispersed teams

> Module 7: Assessing Practice Change
- Adoption indicators
- Farm-level observation checklists
- Farmer interviews and group discussions
- Yield and income evidence
- Attribution and honest reporting

> Module 8: Reporting and Scaling
- Reporting formats for ministries and projects
- Value chain partner reporting
- Lead farmer and trainer-of-trainer cascades
- Sustaining training after project funding ends
- Documenting what worked