



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Part 4: Farmer Field School standard operating procedures

Climate-smart Farmer Field School curriculum





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Climate-smart Farmer Field School curriculum

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This training material Part-4: Farmer Field School standard operating procedures involves guiding supervisors, master trainers, and facilitators to enhance field school implementation, align the CS-FFS methodology with climate-smart practices, and standardize implementation for uniformity and quality across diverse regions and sectors.

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Finally, we acknowledge the communication and ICT team for their graphic design contributions, as well as the logistics and operations team for their support throughout the missions of the international and national teams.

Abbreviations

AESA	agroecosystem analysis
BRCCJ	Building resilience to cope with climate change in Jordan through improving water use efficiency in the agriculture sector
CS-FFS	climate-smart Farmer Field School
CCA	climate change adaptation
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFS	Farmer Field School
ICTs	information and communication technologies
IEC	information, education and communication
IPM	integrated pest management
MEAL	monitoring, evaluation accountability and learning
ODK	open data kit
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
NARC	National Agriculture Research Centre
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
SDGs	sustainable development goals
SMEs	subject matter experts
SOP	standard operating procedures
TOFs	training of facilitators

Background

The Jordan climate-smart Farmer Field School (CS-FFS) programme, built upon the Farmer Field School (FFS) methodology, originated in the late 1980s with the collaborative efforts led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Initially addressing the threat of brown planthoppers in southeast Asia, the FFS methodology evolved from integrated pest management (IPM) for rice monocrops to diverse smallholder farming systems. The incorporation of climate change adaptation (CCA), entrepreneurial, and life skills positioned FFS as a strategy for resilient communities in over 90 countries by 2021.

In response to economic and societal challenges in Jordan, exacerbated by regional conflicts and the COVID-19 pandemic, the CS-FFS initiative aims to address vulnerabilities through the "Building resilience to cope with climate change in Jordan through improving water use efficiency in the agriculture sector (BRCCJ)" project, executed collaboratively by FAO, UNDP, and Jordanian ministries. This seven-year initiative targets vulnerable governorates in the dead sea basin, striving for climate-resilient sustainable development by addressing water management, enhancing livelihoods, and scaling up climate adaptation.

A critical aspect of sustainable agriculture development is ensuring informed investments considering past and future climate risks. Climate resilience, a cornerstone of climate risk management, involves anticipating, preparing for, adapting to, and recovering from climate impacts. Resilience is bolstered by implementing short and long-term climate mitigation and adaptation strategies, emphasizing transparent and inclusive participation in decision-making.

As a pivotal part of the FFS initiative, recognizing the necessity for uniformity and quality across diverse regions and sectors, the project aims to standardize CS-FFS implementation. Central to this initiative is the meticulous formulation of CS-FFS standard operating procedures, ensuring consistency and efficiency in implementation. The approach, inclusive of innovative techniques and a gender-sensitive perspective, underscores the project's commitment to empowering Jordanian communities and enhancing their capacity to adapt to climate change. This comprehensive strategy aligns with the project's overarching goal of fostering climate-resilient sustainable development in Jordan's agriculture sector.

The main objective of this CS-FFS one-curriculum part-4 standard operational procedures is to guide supervisors, master trainers and facilitators in achieving the following objectives in successful implementation of the CS-FFS programme including the training of facilitators or trainers (TOFs/TOTs) course as well as CS-FFS for farmers.

1. Enhance the effectiveness of field school implementation, fostering continuous improvement and adaptation to evolving agriculture challenges.
2. Improve the CS-FFS methodology, aligning it with climate-smart practices.
3. Standardize CS-FFS implementation to ensure uniformity and quality across diverse regions and sectors.

Box 1 Farmer Field School lessons learned (Jordan 2015)

FAO report “A Shift in Global Perspective Institutionalizing Farmer Field School” revealed that the farmers in Jordan have used new skills in public discourse to influence Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and NCARE decisions, lobbying on behalf of FFS programmes. This approach has improved the link between farmers, extension agents and researchers, and increased the level of trust among them, which was weak before (Delgermaa and Jennifer 2015).

- The selection of crop, farmers, facilitators and sites plays an important role. Inappropriate baseline selections led to inflexibility and reduced impact.
- FFS programmes are a process, not a goal; this should be clearly understood by organizations and main players. Jordan still faces this misconception problem within its system.
- Farmer Field Schools are an additional extension technique, not a replacement for other methods. FFS work very well under certain circumstances but do not work well under other circumstances.
- The FFS approach can be implemented for any field, not only IPM, but it needs to be carefully planned.

Source: Delgermaa C. & Jennifer Y. 2015. *A Shift in Global Perspective Institutionalizing Farmer Field School - Occasional papers on Innovation in Family Farming*. Rome: Research and Extension Unit. Rome, FAO. FAO. [Cited on 12 April 2024] <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5113e.pdf>

Farmer Field School establishment criteria

Establishing CS-FFS necessitates a comprehensive set of criteria to ensure their successful implementation. These criteria encompass Village selection, Village committee formation, and member selection, each playing a pivotal role in shaping the effectiveness and sustainability of the programme. By adhering to these criteria, communities can ensure inclusivity, accessibility, and alignment with project objectives, ultimately fostering a conducive environment for knowledge exchange and sustainable agriculture practices. Such meticulous attention to criteria is paramount for the seamless execution and long-term success of field school initiatives, driving meaningful impact within farming communities.

a. Village selection criteria

For successful implementation of the project targets in establishing CS-FFS in the target governorates, the following criteria must be met:

- The village should be within the selected directorate, as agreed upon in the project inception workshop with the government.
- The selected village community must have provided consent to participate and cooperate throughout the project cycle.
- 15–20 farmers with the same cropping system or learning topic must be willing to participate in the training programme.
- The village must have road accessibility and transportation means available.
- The demonstration plots site must be easily accessible to FFS participants and neighbouring farmers, preferably located near a roadside.
- Farmers/landowners must consent to the use of their farm by signing an agreement with the project as a learning/demonstration plot, for the entire duration of the project.
- Identified host farmers must possess landholding exceeding the requirement for establishing a complete package of learning sites and plots.
- All learning plots within one learning site should be at a minimum distance, preferably adjacent to each other.
- Learning farmers should be smallholders (owning less than 50 dunums of rain-fed land and 5 dunums of irrigated land), vulnerable, and/or from low-income households.
- There will be no requirement for land ownership or leasing for women farmers.
- The village profile must be completed before the establishment of CS-FFS.

b. Beneficiary selection criteria

For the successful implementation of the project targets aimed at establishing CS-FFS in the target governorates, the following criteria must be met by potential participants (will be subject for revision by the BRCCJ-FAO and MoA committee):

General members

- Being local permanent resident farmers of the selected village.
- Having engaged in farming for a minimum of 1 year.
- Source of water is from legally permitted sources.
- Owning or leasing less than 50 dunum of rain-fed land and 5 irrigated dunum.
- Allowing only one member from one household to participate.
- Possessing a national identity card.
- Demonstrating a commitment to attend the complete training programme of relevant CS-FFS learning cycle.
- If selected as host farmer(s), be willing to designate a portion of his/her farm for group learning and demonstration activities.
- Demonstrating a commitment to maintain records on input use and report on adoption rates.
- Formally accepting to be visited by supervision and monitoring teams.
- Formally accepting to share the learnings acquired with at least 3 other farmers.
- Being willing to become a volunteer member of the CS-FFS informal organization, which will be formed during the learning cycle through the democratic process.
- Willing to adopt selected climate-smart agriculture (CSA) practice(s) for the CS-FFS (selected crop or commodity) from the CSA practices catalogue that matches the planted crop or their needs and or area.

Women members

- Being local permanent resident farmers of the selected village.
- Each member preferably has a backyard or land for the selected learning topic or enterprise.
- Giving preference to youth family farmers (women).
- Allowing only one member from one household to participate.
- Possessing national identity card.
- Demonstrating a commitment to attend the complete training programme of relevant CS-FFS learning cycle.
- Being willing to consent to the use of his/her farm area for learning/demonstration purposes.
- Demonstrating a commitment to maintain records on input use and report on adoption rates.
- Formally accepting to be visited by supervision and monitoring teams.
- Formally accepting to share the learnings acquired with at least three other farmers.
- Being willing to become a volunteer member of the CS-FFS informal organization, which will be formed during the learning cycle through the democratic process.
- Women will have the choice to attend women-only sessions or mixed-gender sessions in the CS-FFS (where possible).
- Selected sites for learning topics or enterprises must be accessible to all CS-FFS (women) members' women farmers.

- Willingness to learn and demonstrate selected topics or enterprises over the project's life.
- Willingness to adopt selected CSA practices of CS-FFS topics or enterprises from the CSA practices catalogue.

Learning plots and experimentation

The FFS embodies a participatory learning approach, wherein farmers engage in hands-on learning and collaborative creation. They establish learning plots for comparative and analytical learning. Below are the designs for the learning plots within the science by farmers component of the field school approach under the BRCCJ project's CS-FFS model.

Please refer to the CSA catalogue of the BRCCJ project for the design and combination of CSA practices. Learning plot sizes are specified in the catalogue for enhanced clarity.

a. Participatory learning plot (decision by all participants)

The participatory learning plot within the CF-FFS is determined by the chosen crop, resilient practice, and farming system. Collective decisions regarding crop management are made following an analysis of the agroecosystem specific to the selected learning plots.

b. Control plot (decision by individual farmer)

The control plot represents conventional farming practices managed by individual farmers. It is imperative that the control plot meets the basic criteria established for the participatory learning plot, except for participatory decisions.

c. Experimentation (group learning)

Experimentation is a pivotal component of the FFS methodology, which emphasizes discovery learning through hands-on engagement in agriculture practices. Participants in the field school actively formulate questions and subsequently transform them into testable hypotheses within their respective agroecosystems. Guided by fundamental scientific principles, farmers orchestrate small-scale experiments within the field school framework. These experiments adhere to minimum standards, including the inclusion of two treatments (one of which serves as a control) and at least one replication for each experimental or observational study conducted.

Table 1. Farmer Field School learning plots and experimentation

Learning system	FFS type	Size and no. of plots
Participatory learning plot Decision by all participants	CS-FFS (field crops)	1–4 dunum
	CS-FFS (controlled farming)	Up to 1 dunum or standard size greenhouse with selected crop(s)

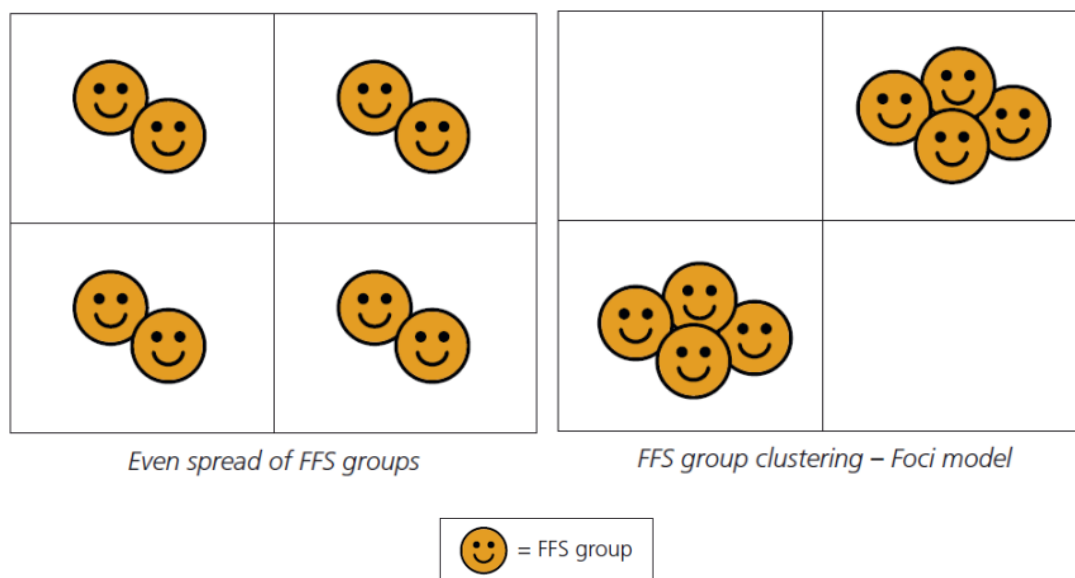
Learning system	FFS type	Size and no. of plots
	CS-FFS (homestead gardening)	Up to 1 dunum area in backyard or farm side
	CS-FFS – Livestock (backyard poultry)	- up to 12 birds (per household) - up to 100 birds (per enterprise)
	CS-FFS – Livestock (backyard small animals)	Average size livestock farm in the village
Control plot /farm Decision by individual farmer-conventional farming	CS-FFS (all types)	Same size of conventional plot/ farm as of learning plot/farm Maximum 1 plot
Experimentation Group learning	Hypothesis to answer questions of member farmers in the filed school	As desired or design within available resources

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Defining the geographical scope

Field experience has shown several benefits from clustering FFS interventions i.e. many groups within a certain locality, the so called “foci model” (FAO, 2016).

Figure 1. Foci model



Source: FAO. 2016. Farmer Field School guidance document – planning for quality programmes. FAO. Rome. <https://www.fao.org/3/i5296e/i5296e.pdf>

The benefits of the foci model are:

- i. More likely to ensure a lasting impact through behaviour and practice change in each locality by ensuring involvement in FFS-related activities by sharing and interaction within a critical mass that is focused on similar ecosystems.
- ii. Easier and more cost-effective monitoring and mentoring support of FFS groups and facilitators.
- iii. Easier to ensure peer-to-peer support among local facilitators, a key to quality maintenance.
- iv. Greater closeness of groups enables group-to-group inter-visits and exchanges, which enhance a feeling of togetherness and a positive competitive spirit across groups.
- v. The closeness of groups facilitates coordinated collective action and group network formation across groups, which often translates into better leverage for success in produce marketing and collective efforts post FFS, etc., it also promotes quicker spill-over effects to the rest of the community.
- vi. Recent developments in FFS show that the foci model provides a good setting for engaging FFS members in championing broader coordinated development actions, such as watershed management

activities due to the concentration in numbers of like-minded people with similar conceptual tools.

Farmer Field School operational flowchart

The FFS operational flowchart is an indispensable tool designed to facilitate the seamless execution of FFS activities. Comprising a series of distinct yet interconnected steps, this flowchart serves as a roadmap for FFS facilitators, empowering them with a structured approach for effective planning and successful implementation. From initial preparation to ongoing monitoring and evaluation, each key step is meticulously organized in a logical sequence, ensuring clarity, consistency, and ultimately, the attainment of desired outcomes within FFS initiatives.

Table 2. Farmer Field School operational flowchart

Step 1	Preparation and planning	Stakeholder meeting
		Area selection
Step 2	Facilitator training and community engagement	Selection of facilitator
		Facilitators training (training of facilitators/training of trainers)
		Village identification
		Village profiling
Step 3	Farmer engagement and needs assessment	Meeting with farmers
		Need assessment
		Identification of learning system (including CSA Practices)
Step 4	Participant registration and group formation	Selection of farmers (registration)
		Group formation
Step 5	Curriculum development and preparation	Curriculum customization (field level)
		Technical clearance and approval (check list)
		Distribution of the training materials

Step 6	Implementation planning	Preparing the implementation schedule
		Inauguration
Step 7	FFS sessions	Regular FFS sessions
		Engagement of SMEs and master trainers
Step 8	FFS extension and learning	Field day
		Exchange visit (optional)
		Graduation ceremony
Step 9	Follow-up and sustainability measures	Farmer facilitators selection (optional)
		Post CS-FFS (after FFS graduation period)

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Farmer Field School implementation checklist

The CS-FFS Implementation checklist serves as a comprehensive guide for the successful execution of field school programmes, structured around key activities and their respective sources of evidence. Aligned with the implementation flow chart, this checklist outlines a sequential arrangement of diverse activities crucial for effective FFS implementation. Each activity is accompanied by its corresponding source of evidence, ensuring thorough verification upon successful implementation. Serving as a roadmap for CS-FFS facilitators, this checklist facilitates meticulous planning and fosters the achievement of programme objectives.

Table 3. Farmer Field School implementation checklist

Activity	Source of evidence (check list)	
Area selection	Project target area (village level) selection endorsed by project documents.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Farming mapping	<input type="checkbox"/>
Selection of facilitator	Through FFS selection committee	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilitators training (training of facilitators/training of trainers course)	Facilitators completed all recommended FFS e-learning courses	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Facilitators completed TOTs course (if organized)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Village identification	Village profiling documented – online or off-line	<input type="checkbox"/>
Introductory meeting with farmers	Meeting record maintained	<input type="checkbox"/>
Need assessment	Need assessment conducted	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identification of CSA practice	Need assessment form	<input type="checkbox"/>
Selection of farmers (Registration)	Village committee resolution	<input type="checkbox"/>
	FFS data book maintained	<input type="checkbox"/>
Group Formation	Organization developed /adopted	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Balloting for FFS group leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>

Activity	Source of evidence (check list)	
Curriculum Customization (Field Level)	Curriculum technical contents endorsed by governorate line department	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technical clearance and approval (Checklist)	FFS specialist or designated master facilitator issue clearance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distribution of the training materials	Distribution receiving list	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preparing the implementation schedule	Travel plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Procurement plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inauguration	FFS data book maintained	<input type="checkbox"/>
Selection of host farmers	Farmers resolution	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regular FFS sessions	FFS data book maintained	<input type="checkbox"/>
Field day	Invitations	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Attendance and report	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exchange visit (optional)	Visit plan approved	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Attendance & report	<input type="checkbox"/>
FFS graduation	FFS assessment conducted	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Farmers evaluation (as per data book record)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Certificate issued /awarded	<input type="checkbox"/>
Farmer facilitators selection (optional)	Curriculum vitae verified.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Interview conducted as per terms of reference.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Selection approved by competent authority.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Post FFS action plan	Farmer-led adaptation extension action plan developed.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Farmers networking completed.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Farmer Field School team composition

The project will involve the engagement of master trainers and facilitators to facilitate the CS-FFS, adhering to following specific criteria.

- Extension staff (50 percent women) already employed with MoA in the project area or close proximity to project Governorates.
- Preference will be given to extension staff with previous experience of FFS.
- Formal agreement with the extension staff and the MoA to participate in project activities and devote at least 40 percent of their time to CS-FFS.

To achieve successful implementation of the project targets for establishing CS-FFS in the target governorates, the following team composition and their respective responsibilities will be observed:

Table 4. Planned Climate-smart Farmer Field School team composition

Description	CS-FFS	CS-FFS (for women)
Targets of CS-FFS	200 CS-FFS	70 CS-FFS
Ma'an	50	17
Madaba	50	17
Karak	50	18
Tafileh	50	18
Partners under technical supervision and support	Farmer's organization	Farmer's organization
Technical supervision	Master facilitators (MOA)	Master facilitators (MOA)
Technical support	MOA, and FAO	MOA, and FAO
Overall administrative supervision	MOA	MOA

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Note: Distribution of targeted beneficiaries will be changed during implementation.

Farmers Field School basic concepts

a. Characteristics of the Farmer Field School basic learning cycle

Working in groups (15–20 farmers)

Working in groups comprising 15–20 farmers for the FFS is essential. Participants must reside within a reasonable proximity to the FFS study site. Enrolments falling below 15 participants are deemed not cost-effective, rendering the FFS an unsuitable extension approach to pursue.

Season-long activities

Following the season of crops, cropping systems or development cycles of animals or enterprise.

Regular meetings/sessions during the season

To enhance the participation of women and especially mothers with small children, FFS meetings should not last longer than 3 hours and in very exceptional cases circumstances, some of the sessions not requiring agroecosystem analysis (AESA) can be shifted to the afternoon hours based on consensus.

Study/learning plots/experiments

To compare current practices with improved/alternative practices or crops or enterprise(s) or animal farm(s).

Each FFS meeting/session includes.

- Discovery learning.
- AESA mandatory during crop(s) presence in the field.
- A group dynamics exercise.
- A special topic.
- Feedback on the session.

Facilitation not teaching.

Participatory learning by adopting concepts by doing.

b. Length of learning cycle and frequency of meetings

FFS participants meet on a weekly (annual crops e.g. vegetables and grains including millet, quinoa etc.), bi-weekly (long-term crops e.g. wheat, maize, tobacco etc.) or monthly (most perennials e.g. fruit plans including olive, citrus, apple etc.) basis according to regular schedules defined and agreed by the group members. The length of the FFS cycle depends on the focal activity. FFS tailored toward building resilience with a focus on climate change adaptation or disaster risk

reduction starts from a minimum of 18 months, IPM vegetable FFS range from 2 to 6 months, Livestock, a full year cycle or more is usually needed to allow for all seasonal variations to be studied, Farm forestry FFS range from 12 to 18 months, etc. (FAO 2016).

Once the FFS has started and group and study fields have been established, a regular meeting session will include AESA, a group dynamics exercise, and a special topic.

Keeping in mind the BRCCJ project's CSA interventions, the length of Farmer Field School cycle will follow the guidance documents criteria with introduction of smart participatory farmer led meetings and sessions at advance stage with the inclusion of ICTs solutions and farmer friendly data management tools.

c. Agroecosystem analysis

The cornerstone of the FFS methodology lies in agroecosystem analysis, which involves conducting field-based assessments of the interactions among crops or livestock and various biotic and abiotic elements present within the agriculture environment. These elements include, but are not limited to, relationships between plant or animal growth and factors such as pests, diseases, weeds, water, soil, and weather conditions.

The objective of AESA within the FFS framework is to enable participants to recognize the importance of regular field observations and to analyse the developments, challenges, and opportunities within the ecosystem. By enhancing their ability to make informed decisions regarding farm management, AESA fosters a collaborative environment where critical group discussions lead to a deeper collective understanding of the different components and their interplay within agroecosystems.

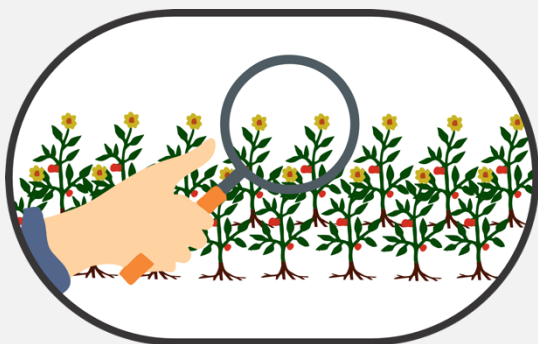
Usually, AESA exercise takes about two to three hours and is done at weekly/bi-weekly/monthly intervals based on learning crops, livestock, or farming system critical stages throughout the season or learning cycle. AESA frequency also depends upon the skills delivery as well. In the case of field school on cropping system (two or more crops), AESA on the first (major) crops will follow the regular practice as mentioned above under the supervision of the facilitator, while for the second crop, the learned AESA skills can be practiced by farmers on the learning plot independently as well.

The FFS AESA approach emphasizes (Rural 21, 2010; Jam M.K., 2021):

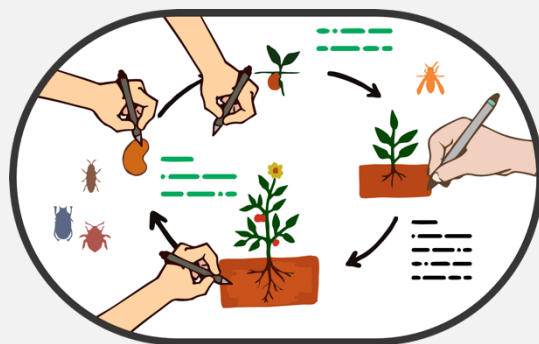
- observation,
- discussion,
- analysis,
- collective decision-making,
- presentation and
- taking appropriate collective and individual actions.

Figure 2. The agroecosystem analysis – Four-stage process

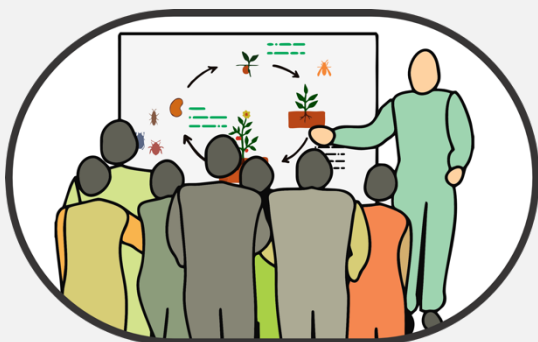
Agroecosystem analysis process



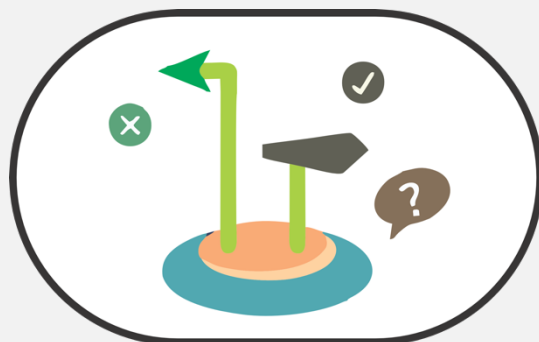
Step-1 Field-based observation: Farmers are divided into sub-groups and tasked with observing field conditions based on a set of predefined indicators. The focus of this stage is to understand the interrelationships between different components within the agroecosystem.



Step-2 Data analysis and documentation: Each sub-group examines, documents, and analyzes their field observations. This includes drawings of the field conditions and formulating detailed recommendations and decisions based on their findings.



Step-3 Feedback presentation and discussion: All sub-groups reconvene to share their findings and conclusions with the larger group. The presentation of results is followed by a question-and-answer session where the presenting group must justify their analysis and recommendations.



Step-4 Collective action planning: The full group synthesizes the information and insights gained from each sub-group's presentation. Through collective discussion, the participants agree on a set of actions to be implemented based on the shared understanding and decisions reached.

Source: Authors' own elaboration.



See details in part 3: One-curriculum. Climate-smart Farmer Field School curriculum. Amman. FAO.

d. Group dynamics exercise

A regular session in an FFS includes a group dynamics exercise, which entails a short activity that provokes discussion on teamwork, problem-solving, leadership skills and other group development processes. In some cases, it also serves as an icebreaker and energizer (FAO, 2016).



See details in part 3: One-curriculum. Climate-smart Farmer Field School curriculum. Amman. FAO.

e. Special topic

In addition to AESA and group dynamics each FFS session determines a special topic of interest for the group at the particular crop growth stage or technology implementation. Special topics often involve small experiments to highlight particular technical issues (e.g. CSA learning plots where studies are set-up to understand water use efficiency through direct observation). Topics of socio-economic interest can also be included in a session in this way, depending on the needs of the FFS group and the wider community (FAO, 2016). Topic of climate smart practice with set studies can also be part of the special topic to facilitate participatory learning by doing to investigate the best suited practices under technology adaptation and co-creation approach.

f. Avoid dependency

Field School is a learning-oriented activity. To further the learning, certain inputs might be provided by the programme. However, caution needs to be taken to ensure that dependency is not embedded in the programme. The provision of inputs should be conditional on an accompanying contribution by the group members, to prevent it becoming the primary motivation factor for farmers to participate in the FFS activity, rather than the envisioned learning gains. This might particularly be the case in emergency and rehabilitation contexts.

The programme needs to integrate a clear communication and awareness creation strategy in the ground working and group formalization phase to ensure that farmers' expectations on what the FFS will be able to provide are levelled before they make decisions to join.

To minimize unrealistic expectations, ample time should be allocated to the crucial stage of group formation. There must also be sufficient lead-time to the main learning season to avoid rushing the process. A comprehensive timeline/calendar with clear triggers to initiate all the critical phases of the FFS process should be prepared and agreed on.

g. Terminologies in Farmer Field School approach

In the FFS approach, effective communication is crucial for successful knowledge transfer and learning. In FFS programme documents it is important to consider how the narrative defines the object and thus to try to be consistent with the terminology used to describe FFS and FFS programmes. Below is a table suggesting which words to avoid and to use to align with the core principles of FFS approach (FAO, 2016).

Table 5. Terminology in Farmer Field School approach

Words to avoid	Words to use
Technology adoption	Technology adaptation/co-creation
Technology transfer	Validation/co-production
Demonstrations	Experimentation and critical discussion
Training /teaching	Facilitation
Dissemination/diffusion	Sharing, spreading or secondary impact
Increased specification	Diversified/holistic
Access to market	Leverage in market

Source: FAO. 2016. Farmer Field School Guidance Document – planning for quality programmes. Rome: Rome, FAO. <https://www.fao.org/3/i5296e/i5296e.pdf>

Here are some more words to avoid and use while facilitating the field school learning to enhance the effectiveness of the FFS approach:

Try to avoid:

1. Minimize the use of technical jargon, such as complex terms like CSA, adaptation, mitigation, IPM, AESA, which may be difficult for farmers to understand; instead, strive to comprehend the agriculture background of each member of the group and, if needed, explain such terms in simpler language, ensuring accessibility and relatability without alienating participants.
2. Avoid assuming a certain level of knowledge. Always gauge the participants' understanding and adjust your language accordingly.
3. Minimize negative or discouraging language. Instead of saying what farmers should not do, focus on positive alternatives.
4. Steer clear of abstract concepts that may be challenging to grasp. Use concrete examples and practical demonstrations whenever possible.

5. Keep the tone conversational and approachable. Formal language can create a barrier between the facilitator and participants.
6. Use an icebreaker activity whenever you notice that there is boredom within the group. Make sure your group is active throughout the meeting to maximize its benefits.

Try to:

1. Use simple and straightforward language that is easy for farmers to understand. Break down complex ideas into simpler terms.
2. Use practical examples, real-life, local examples that participants can relate to. This makes the information more tangible and applicable to their context.
3. Encourage questions, discussions, and participation. Use phrases like "Let's discuss," "What are your thoughts?" to engage participants actively.
4. Complement verbal communication with visual aids, such as diagrams, charts, and images. These aids can help convey information more effectively especially to those who are poorly literate or illiterate.
5. Use action-oriented language that prompts participants to apply what they've learned. For example, instead of saying "Understand this concept," say "try learning by doing."
6. Incorporate local terminology and expressions, making the content culturally relevant and easier for participants to grasp.

Facilitator's reporting and communication

Reporting and communication are vital for FFS Facilitators as they enable the monitoring of progress, evaluation of outcomes, accountability, and learning. By regularly reporting on FFS planning and implementation of the activities and outcomes, facilitators can assess the effectiveness of learning plans, provide feedback to master facilitators, farmers, supervisors, and managers and gather input for improvement. Improved reporting and communication contribute to the success and sustainability of training programmes by ensuring informed decision-making, promoting learning and adaptation, and maximizing the impact on farmers' livelihoods.

The FFS Facilitator's Reporting and Communication in the field school programme entails the diligent recording of various data points by facilitators throughout the learning process. These data, outlined below, are meticulously documented in a designated data book, overseen jointly by facilitators and farmers. Subsequently, prior to the graduation ceremony, field school farmers actively participate in the final analysis of the report. Following this, the compiled Field School data book undergoes clearance by the master facilitator and FFS specialist.

The resulting economic analysis report is then disseminated to the FAO for further review and consideration. FFS Specialists, MEAL experts, or other subject matter specialists periodically monitor the field school data book during field visits to ensure quality and provide support to the field team. specialized android application can be utilized data upload on regular basis and utilized for ongoing analysis, enabling the extraction of monthly, quarterly, and annual reports as needed. Facilitators are responsible for maintaining field school records in both physical and digital formats (if provided), adhering strictly to prescribed criteria and formats.

Table 6. Reporting and communication checklist

Reports and records	Source of evidence (checklist)	
FFS data books	Data book maintained by facilitator	<input type="checkbox"/>
FFS members profile	Signed by FFS members	<input type="checkbox"/>
Farmers organization profile (optional)	Members elected through balloting	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Members selected without balloting	<input type="checkbox"/>
Session attendance	Regular attendance entries – FFS data book	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Attendance analysis for graduation at end	<input type="checkbox"/>
FFS session planning	One-week advance session planning	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reports and records	Source of evidence (checklist)	
Host farmer consent resolution	Host farmers consent taken in advance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Science by farmers – Experimentation	Experiments recorded with data analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agroecosystem analysis	AESA records are copied regularly	<input type="checkbox"/>
Field practices register	Weekly data entry	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Complete data entry	<input type="checkbox"/>
Field day report	Report with the signature of participants in the FFS Data Book	<input type="checkbox"/>
FFS final report	The report developed by facilitator with FFS farmers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visitor remarks and farmers remarks	Remarks recorded with signature	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report agreement	Facilitators attested the data of the book	<input type="checkbox"/>
Success stories	Success stories recorded	<input type="checkbox"/>
Case studies	Case studies reported	<input type="checkbox"/>
Photos	Captured and shared (via social network properly)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic analysis	Learning plots	<input type="checkbox"/>
	CSA practices	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: Authors' own elaboration.



See details in:

Part 3: One-curriculum. Climate-smart Farmer Field School curriculum. Amman. FAO.

Part 5: Data recording and governance. Climate-smart Farmer Field School curriculum. Amman. FAO.

Part 6: Digital support. Climate-smart Farmer Field School curriculum. Amman. FAO.

Post-Farmer Field School criteria

The culmination of a Farmer Field School programme marks not its conclusion but rather the beginning of its post-FFS phase, emphasizing ongoing services and collaborative learning within the wider community. This post-FFS strategy is essential for ensuring the sustainability of field school initiatives and their contribution to the BRCCJ. Key actions in this regard include continuous engagement with graduates, facilitating knowledge exchange among stakeholders, fostering community outreach initiatives, and integrating adaptation agendas into agriculture practices. By prioritizing post-FFS efforts, field schools can not only sustain their impact but also catalyse broader transformative changes in the agriculture landscape of the Jordan.

Table 7. Post Farmer Field School criteria (optional)

Actions considered as success stories (optional)	Time of action	
	During FFS	Post-FFS
Farmer organization development	Yes	-
Farmers networking and linkages	Yes	Yes
Farmer entrepreneurship development – farmers as local service providers	Yes	Yes
Farmer as facilitators	-	Yes
CSA campaigns	Yes	Yes
Female farmer role encouraged within the community	-	Yes
Agriculture water efficient adaptations widely spread	-	Yes

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Farmer Field School eLearning

The global Farmer Field School platform offers a range of digital learning opportunities through its eLearning platform and networks. It offers essential e-learning courses focused on the FFS approach, which are mandatory for all facilitators to complete and revisit periodically, preferably every six months. These courses provide facilitators with valuable insights, updates, and best practices in implementing the FFS approach effectively. By engaging with these e-learning modules, facilitators enhance their understanding and proficiency in guiding field school activities, ultimately contributing to the success and impact of the FFS programme.

Table 8. Farmer Field School e-learning support online

Course	Available at	You will learn about	Time duration	Repeat
Introduction to Farmer Field School approach	https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=724	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basics of the FFS approach. The principles of non-formal education. The objectives and benefits of FFS. The origin and expansion of FFS in terms of locations, topics and modalities. The key elements of FFS sessions: the AESA, field studies, group dynamics, special topics, recap, evaluation. The FFS basic learning cycle. 	1 hour	6 months
Implementation of Farmer Field School	https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=776	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process to plan and initiate an FFS programme. The roles in an FFS programme, and different responsibilities and training needs. The strategies available to develop human capacities needed. The process to define FFS curricula – as a co-creation with communities. The activities required to deliver effective FFS throughout the season. 	3 hours	6 months

Course	Available at	You will learn about	Time duration	Repeat
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All programme management activities, including budgeting, monitoring & evaluation (M&E), impact assessment, reporting. 		
The agroecologist (optional based on availability)	Available at YOU@FAO	The course provides an immersive but quick introduction to agroecology and the 10 elements of agroecology, and how they can support the achievements of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). This is accomplished through a gamified learning experience by presenting simplified examples and scenarios to promote systemic and holistic thinking, across all dimensions of sustainability, allowing the user to explore the different options of how to incorporate agroecology into his/her work, to support transitions to agroecology for more sustainable food and agriculture systems.	45 minutes	6 months

Source: Authors' own elaboration.

Farmer Field School information, education, and communication material developed

A variety of information, education, and communication (IEC) materials have been developed for FFS, aimed at enhancing agriculture knowledge and practices among facilitators and farmers. While the list provided is comprehensive, it is important to note that national and governorates teams are still in the process of registering additional FFS IEC materials they have developed.

These materials serve as valuable resources in the FFS curriculum, providing facilitators with essential information and tools to improve their FFS training. It also offers information and tools to farmers for farming techniques and achieves better agriculture outcomes. Through ongoing collaboration and development efforts, FFS practitioners and members have access to a wide range of resources tailored to their specific needs and contexts, contributing to the success and effectiveness of the FFS programme.

Global

Global FFS platform IEC material	https://www.fao.org/family-farming/resources/en/
Access agriculture	https://www.accessagriculture.org/

National and local

FAO Jordan	Fao.org
National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC)	Ncare.gov.jo

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Project

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