**EXERCISE 13C. PROBLEM ANALYSIS**

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| *OBJECTIVE*  **After this exercise the participants will be able to:**   * Identify the causes of problems facing the group. * Identify those problems that are the most important and that the farmers can do something about. * Name solutions to the problems. | |
| *EQUIPMENT NEEDED*   * Large sheets of paper, marker pens * Small sheets of paper | *EXPECTED OUTPUTS*   * A list of problems in order of importance, along with a list of potential solutions. |
| *TIME*   * 2 hours | *PREPARATION*   * None |

*This exercise enables farmers to identify the causes of problems they face, judge which are most important, and identify solutions.*

*SUGGESTED PROCEDURE:*

1. Ask the farmers to list the main problems they face that are related to production and marketing of their selected product. They should write each problem on a single sheet of paper.
2. Ask them to put similar problems into groups. Give each group a name, such as “low prices,” “pests and diseases,” or “poor quality.”
3. Write the names on the left side of a big sheet of paper (column 1 in Table 48).
4. Ask the farmers to describe what they currently do to deal with these problems. List their answers in column 2 of the table.
5. Ask the farmers to suggest how they might overcome the problems better – either by improving their current solutions, or by implementing new solutions. Write these possible future solutions in the column 3 of the table.
6. Invite the group to list the activities they will need to do in order to implement the solutions. Put these in column 4 of the table.
7. Help the group decide which of the solutions they will implement. Write these in column 5 of the table.

*NOTES*

Some of the problems (such as pests and diseases) may be technical – so it may be helpful to arrange for an agricultural specialist to advise farmers on what is feasible.

TABLE 48. EXAMPLE OF A PROBLEM ANALYSIS

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PROBLEMS CURRENT POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT AGREED SOLUTIONS SOLUTIONS SOLUTIONS TO DO** | | | | |
| Low prices | Do nothing | Bulk product and negotiate better price | Coordinate planting and harvesting | Yes |
| Agree on collection point | Yes |
| Appoint marketing agent to identify buyers and negotiate price | Yes |
| Store until prices rise | Dry produce sufficiently after harvest | Yes |
| Build warehouse to store produce | No |
| Pests and diseases | Spray insecticides | integrated pest management | Get training on pest management methods | Yes |
| Poor quality | Sell in local market | increase quality | Sort produce by quality | Yes |
| Prevent contamination during harvest and processing | Yes |