**EXERCISE 15. FILLING IN THE BUSINESS PLAN**

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| *OBJECTIVE*  **After this exercise the participants will be able to:**   * Write a business plan for the group’s enterprise. | |
| *EQUIPMENT NEEDED*   * Large sheets of paper, marker pens, calculator * Optional: computer with word-processing and spreadsheet software or the Farmbook software; printer, paper | *EXPECTED OUTPUTS*   * A completed business plan for the group. |
| *TIME*   * The time to write a business plan depends upon the level of detail and complexity of the plan and the amount of information that is available. if the information has been gathered, the field agent should plan for 1 to 2 days to complete this task. | *PREPARATION*   * Bring the results of previous exercises in Step 4. |

*This exercise leads farmers through the various steps in completing a business plan.*

*Make sure that the farmers do as much of the work as possible. That way they will learn how to put together a business plan by themselves.*

*SUGGESTED PROCEDURE:*

1. Bring together a small group of farmers who have been selected to draw up the business plan. This will probably include the group chairperson, secretary, treasurer, production coordinator, and marketing coordinator.
2. Using large sheets of paper, go through the outline of a business plan and explain briefly what goes in each of the 10 sections.
3. Ask the group to state the information that should go into each section of the business plan. Summarize this on the large sheets of paper, and type it into the computer using a word processor and spreadsheet or the Farmbook software.
4. If there is uncertainty or discussion about certain items, mark them and make sure they are discussed and decided on by the larger group.
5. When the plan is finished, call a meeting of the larger group to discuss and refine it.
6. Discuss how the plan can be used – to guide the group’s activities, to obtain support from business services, and to obtain loans from a financial institution.
7. If you are using the Farmbook application to develop the business plan, make sure that a hard copy of the profit analysis and business plan narrative is given to the farmer group for their records and actions.