**EXERCISE 21. A PLAN FOR SCALING UP**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *OBJECTIVE*  **After this exercise the participants will be able to:**   * Set new production and sales targets. * Develop a plan to organize farmers so they can supply target markets | |
| *EQUIPMENT NEEDED*   * Flip chart, marker pens, calculator | *EXPECTED OUTPUTS*   * Farmers begin to organize a new plan for the next season, with higher targets, or more lucrative markets and more farmers involved in production and sales. |
| *TIME*   * 2 and a half hours | *PREPARATION*   * None |

*SUGGESTED PROCEDURE:*

Lead a discussion with farmers on how they might scale up. Lesson 21 discussed how farmers’ groups can start thinking about scaling up their agroenterprises – review these options with farmers. The field agent should lead the farmers through a series of question to work out the basic ideas that the farmers will use for scaling up their production. The farmers group will need to review their performance and also work on their market plans to evaluate scaling options.

Specifically, farmers will need to:

1. Review market strategy: This review will require revisiting markets to find out whether buyers will purchase more produce and if so, what increase in production do the buyers want?
2. Fixing the new target: Based on the previous season’s production, sales and with new information from buyers, the farmers can set a new target.
3. Identifying the appropriate scaling method: What should the farmers do to scale, how can the field agent help? And what do farmers want to do?

**When talking to the farmers, considering the following questions:**

* Do you, as field agent, know other farmer groups, growing the same product who could join with this group?
* Can the farmers increase production within their group? (yes / no)
* How will the farmers increase their production and sales? (more technology, more land, more members)
* Can the farmers work with other existing groups?
* Do the farmers need to form new groups? (yes / no)
* Who will facilitate the new group members? (project / farmers / other)

**Examples of more detailed questions**

Does the field agent know about other farmer groups in this market?

• Field agents work with other farmer groups, and should tell the farmers if there are other like-minded groups in the project, or outside the project who might be interested in joining forces to work on new marketing targets. If the answer to this is yes, the field agent should work to link up similar farmer groups.

**Issues related to increasing production from existing group**

• Did the sales in the previous season indicate that farmers could sell more produce to identified buyers at a profit?

• Can the farmers reach their new production target from the group members?

• Would the increase in production come from improved technology, more land, or new members in the group?

• Can the farmers invest in new technology to achieve new targets?

**Issues related to increasing production from increasing size of existing group**

• Are there other farmers who want to join the group?

• Can the first group help new farmer to develop an enterprise plan?

• Is it best for the new farmers to join the existing group or form an associate group?

**Do the farmers need to work with other existing groups?**

• Is there a cooperative or other association that the first group can join?

• Can the group associate with other project groups, that are nearby to increase their abilities to scale their input purchases and to sell their produce?

**Who will facilitate the new group members?**

• Can the project field agent help to support the new members or groups?

• Can the project field agent help to train a local private sector field agent?

• Will any of the existing group members take on the local service provider role?

**Mapping the scaling plan**

Using a sheet of paper and marker pens, ask the farmers to draw a picture or diagram of how they plan to scale up their production. in the example below, the farmers have expanded their first group and joined with two new groups.

**Task for the group**

Work with the farmers to draw up a scaling plan for farmers for the next year. Ask the farmers to address the following:

* Clarify increased demand for product. if not available, do a rapid market survey.
* Identify buyers and confirm volume they will buy.
* Map out the basic scaling process
* Confirm if there are existing groups to link with.
* If more members are needed, recruit them and record their names and locations
* Identify who will provide field agent support or communication to members.
* Select a person in the first group who will work with other groups.
* Start the process of market analysis and business development for the next season.

Note that implementation plans will now include more than one group.

Record each of these activities and inform all group members about decisions for scaling up.

