**EXERCISE 7. LOCAL PLANT HEALTH**

|  |
| --- |
| *OBJECTIVE***After this exercise the participants will be able to:*** Explain key concepts behind plant health in the local context.
 |
| *EQUIPMENT NEEDED** Flip chart and marker pens
* Samples of unhealthy plant material
 | *EXPECTED OUTPUTS** Group members have identified some of the key issues related to plant health in their community and shared ideas about how to address problems.
 |
| *TIME*30-45 minutes | *PREPARATION** Immediately before the group meeting, the facilitator should collect examples of unhealthy plants (these are plants that are suffering from either nutrient stress or pest or disease attack).
 |

*SUGGESTED PROCEDURE:*

1. Show the different samples of unhealthy plant materials to the group. Ask:
	* Have you seen such examples on your own farms?
	* Do you know what is causing the problem?
2. Continue by facilitating a discussion on plant health. Have group members identify the most important and common plant health issues locally. Explore examples from all areas relevant for plant growth: plant nutrition; too much or too little water; the effect of growing field crops in the shade/sun; the different soils and which plants grow well in the area; as well as pests and diseases (focusing on the most harmful).
3. After identifying the necessary elements for healthy plant growth, help participants identify the causes of several key problems that affect local crops. Continue by discussing various ways that these problems are being addressed and whether other strategies can be pursued. Ask the group to consider testing some of the practices recommended in this lesson to see if the situation improves.

**