

# Chapter 5 -

## Introducing Intensive

## Family Food Production (FFP)

### Overview of **FFP facilitation** processes

Family Food Production is introduced to households through seven (7) bi-weekly **FFP** day-workshops with participating households (the detail is described below). These day-workshops are typically scheduled over a fourteen (14) week period.

During the programme start-up phase, each of these day-workshops is preceded by a session to prepare the **FFP Facilitators** and **FFP Assistants** and followed by a debriefing session with the facilitators.

Once the **FFP Facilitators** and **FFP Assistants** are fully trained, the need for facilitator preparatory sessions diminishes. However, debriefing remains an important opportunity for the **FFP Manager** to keep up to date on progress and to troubleshoot and give guidance to the **FFP Facilitators**.

### **FFP** introduction for households

The seven day-workshops are very practical and cover the basic know-how a family needs to get started on intensive home food production.

Workshop 1 – ‘Nutrition’ – tries to lift out and recognise prior learning among the group of households, which is used in two ways: firstly to create awareness and encourage practical sharing among households of knowledge available amongst themselves; and secondly, to enable adaptation of the content of further workshops to build on what they know. In Workshop 1, households also do ‘vision-building’, by analysing their current eating habits, identifying gaps and planning what to plant to address those gaps. Finally, the preparation of deep trenches is explained and demonstrated, and for homework, they dig their first trench and collect organic material to fill it with.

In follow-up visits after Workshop 1, participants move together from house-to-house and help each other prepare (pack) their first trench, under guidance of the **FFP Facilitator** and **FFP Assistant(s)**. Seeds and seedlings are planted in the newly made trenches as a demonstration and incentive. The facilitator/assistants use the different situations encountered at the different homesteads to highlight principles and solutions. A small checklist helps the facilitator ensure that she covers all the basics in the course of the day.

Workshop 2 – ‘Mind Mobilisation’ – includes workshop and practical content. In the workshop, participants analyse their present situation at home, and then develop a five-year food security vision (their ‘Helicopter Plan’). The garden layout plan of at least one of the participants is then

demonstrated and discussed at her/his house by the group as a whole. The households' homework is to discuss and refine their Helicopter Plan with the rest of their household; and to continue planting and to prepare another trench bed.

The sequence and content of the next workshops, namely workshops 3, 4 and 5, can be changed to respond to the actual questions arising from the households' gardening in this period. Workshop 3 covers growing seedlings, soil fertility and basic irrigation practice and Workshop 4 is on how to prepare cheap remedies and plant food from waste.

Workshop 5 – 'Fruit' – is devoted to fruit tree planting. Households had already ordered fruit trees in Workshop 1, after having identified their nutrition gaps. From Workshop 2 onwards, they were frequently reminded to finish preparing their fruit tree holes. During Workshop 4, their orders were finalised according to how many fruit tree holes they had been prepared by then: after this date, there would be insufficient time for the organic matter in the holes to mature to be ready for planting by Workshop 5.

Workshop 6 – 'Food' – is a celebration! By now everyone had already started to eat from their efforts. This workshop covers affordable, healthy food processing and preservation, and ends with a feast shared with neighbours and leadership in the community. This confirms their achievement and fosters support and recognition from others.

Workshop 7 – 'Water' – is on safety and maintenance of the RWH Dam, and is conducted once the construction of the RWH Dams of all households in the FFP Group had been completed.

### Family Food Production: Introduction for Households

These workshops follow after the necessary preliminary work has been done, e.g. 'opening the village door' through consultations with leadership, government and relevant development organisations active in the area, village scoping, and active identification and invitation of interested households within the target group (i.e. especially households below the breadline).

**Workshop 1: 'Nutrition' – nutrition visioning; planting & harvest planning; trench demonstration**

**Workshop 2: 'Mind Mobilisation' – present situation; garden layout visioning (Helicopter Plan)**

**Workshop 3: 'Seedlings' – growing seedlings; soil fertility; irrigation**

**Workshop 4: 'Brews' – for plant food; and for pest and disease remedies**

**Workshop 5: 'Fruit' – fruit production**

**Workshop 6: 'Food' – Food processing & celebration**

**Workshop 7: 'Water' – RWH Dam safety & maintenance; water management user education**

---

## Preparing FFP Facilitators

The content used for the preparation of **FFP Facilitators** covers more than the content introduced to households in the 14-week introductory period. This better equips facilitators to deal with the wide range of questions likely to be asked by households on their journey of discovery in home food production. Further, **FFP Facilitators** remain available to households for follow-up throughout the RWH project implementation, which would normally span a period of at least 18 months.

The **FFP Facilitators' Guide** (under preparation by the Water Research Commission) is used to prepare the **FFP Facilitators**, and is used by them as a constant reference in their work with households.

# Debriefing and guiding **FFP Facilitators**

Facilitation in impoverished environments is harsh and taxing. **FFP Managers** must have good rapport with the **FFP Facilitators** and must remain sufficiently in touch with their work to foresee and manage problems before they arise.

During the project start-up phase, **FFP Managers** must accompany **FFP Facilitators** and back them up throughout their first round of workshop presentations. Debriefing needs to be thorough and aimed at shaping the **FFP Facilitator** to hone her facilitation skills and content knowledge. **FFP Facilitators** are encouraged to practice **FFP** at home to improve their practical know-how so as to better relate to the problems encountered by participating households.

Debriefing also aims to pick up on practical issues arising in relation to the participants. This may include matters like changes required to the content for remaining workshops, tensions among participants, external impediments to progress, etc. Many of these matters may then be passed on to the **ISD Facilitator** to address further.

A useful format for debriefing can be borrowed from the PRA facilitation techniques of the late Jimmy Mascarenhas from Outreach in India, namely: Process, Content, Learning.

Once the **FFP Facilitator** is well skilled and confident, the **FFP Manager** can shorten the debriefing sessions, but abandoning them is a recipe for trouble. From this point forward, the **FFP Manager** would assume a monitoring role.

## **FFP** staff collaboration with **ISD** and **TECH**

Construction cannot take place until a household has established an intensive garden, and therefore project progress depends directly on the **FFP** staff. Delays in **FFP** progress could therefore create major tensions in the team, for instance when the **TECH** staff are not receiving enough 'households ready for construction' from **FFP** staff. This could place tremendous pressure on **FFP** staff, who must therefore plan their work well and find creative ways of encouraging enough households to achieve project targets, without jeopardising good developmental process.

The diagram below shows typical planning of the work of the **FFP** section to ensure that enough households are ready for construction each month to achieve project targets. In this example, construction must start consistently on 20 RWH Dams per month in the full production period of the project (please refer to the last column of the diagram). The first months have lower numbers to allow for the training of **builders**, and the final months provide for 'mopping up' the final few tanks to be constructed, as well as addressing final issues on snaglists for previously completed tanks.

The diagram is based on the assumption that not all households that register will achieve the requirements to receive a RWH Dam. Therefore, a larger number of households are mobilised initially, and drop-out is provided for in three of the four phases shown, namely mobilisation, garden implementation and excavation, but not in construction (which is under control of the RIA and should therefore not produce any incomplete RWH Dams).

The diagram also allows some lag time for slower households to still achieve the requirements for receiving a RWH Dam before the last opportunity for construction passes them by. For instance, households in "**FFP Group A**" are mobilised in Month 3, and have an opportunity to qualify for construction up to Month 9.

**Example of a staggered process of household mobilisation for a project of 160 tanks in 15 months**

MONTH	MOBILISED				GARDENING				EXCAVATING				BUILDING	
	group	to be mobilised this month	total mobilised	not gardening yet	groups	to start gardening this month	total gardening	not excavating yet	groups	to start excavating this month	total excavating	not building yet	groups	to start building this month
1														
2														
3	A	20	20	8	A	12	12	4	A	8	8	8		
4	B	20	40	16	AB	12	24	6	AB	10	18	18		
5	C	40	80	32	ABC	24	48	10	ABC	20	38	34	A	4
6	D	40	120	48	BCD	24	72	14	ABCD	20	58	44	AB	10
7	E	40	160	64	CDE	24	96	18	BCDE	20	78	44	ABC	20
8	F	40	200	80	DEF	24	120	22	CDEF	20	98	44	ABCD	20
9	G	40	240	96	EFG	24	144	26	DEFG	20	118	44	ABCDE	20
10			240	72	FG	24	168	30	EFG	20	138	44	BCDEF	20
11			240	58	G	14	182	32	FG	12	150	36	CDEFG	20
12			240	46	G	12	194	34	G	10	160	26	DEFG	20
13			240	46			194	34			160	14	EFG	12
14			240	46			194	34			160	4	FG	10
15			240	46			194	34			160	0	G	4
		<b>240</b>		19%		<b>194</b>		18%		<b>160</b>		0%		<b>160</b>
						81%				82%				100%
										67%				82%
														67%

The chronology of activities of the FFP staff, and how it relates to the work of other site staff at the households, is explained in detail in [Appendix C1.3](#) "Procedures for introducing FFP at household level".

Also see [Appendix C1.2](#) "Combined Procedure for ISD, FFP and TECH staff."

In [Appendix C3.4](#) "Books and Forms used by the FFP Facilitator and FFP Assistant", the [Form FFP02: 'Household Milestones'](#), shows clearly how the work of the FFP staff precedes construction at the households.