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GTZ + MoARD



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Contents

Introduction

- Module 1** Organizing the training
- Module 2** Establishing the nursery
- Module 3** Propagation I: Seed
- Module 4** Propagation 2: Cuttings, stooling and layering
- Module 5** Propagation 3: Budding and grafting
- Module 6** Nursery-tending operations
- Module 7** Establishing fruit trees
- Module 8** Tree maintenance
- Module 9** Pest and disease control
- Module 10** Harvesting and handling
- Module 11** Forming a group formation

Specific fruit trees

- Avocado
- Banana
- Cashew nut
- Citrus
- Coconut
- Custard apple
- Guava
- Macadamia
- Mango
- Papaya
- Passion fruit
- Temperate fruits
- Tree tomato (tamarillo)
- White sapote

Preface

Improving farmers' skills in managing their natural resources is a long-term strategy that benefits the farm-household economy. However, helping farmers gain practical skills to better cope with the fast-changing environment was not a priority in the way extension systems were implemented in the past. Train and Visit (T&V), for instance, emphasized disseminating information rather than developing skills. Hence, even skilled farmers were scarcely acknowledged or used within the extension process to pass their expertise on to other farmers. At the same time, extension officers who newly acquired skills could not fully make use of them because they had not had the opportunity to practice them adequately.

Lack of capital and cash for investment is a predominant feature of smallholder agriculture. However, increasing fruit and tree-crop production of exotic and indigenous species, combined with improved propagation and management, is a highly feasible strategy, which does not require capital or cash. Resource-poor farmers can increase their farm potential simply through investing time and skills. It is the lack of practical skills in propagating, improving and managing tree crops and the lack of quality planting material that have been the main hindrances in intensifying smallholder production of these crops.

To overcome these problems, ITFSP in collaboration with extension officers of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD), has developed a new farmer-trainer extension approach for developing farmers' skills. This approach is based on giving on-the-job training to skilled farmers, who then become recognized trainers, and pass on their skills to other farmers.

This manual is a direct result of developing this extension process. The idea for the manual arose from the need for training guidelines and technical information, identified during the farmer-trainers' training workshops for skill development in tree-crop propagation and management. It presents the main aspects of producing fruit and tree crops in a practical way. It equips farmers and field extension staff with guidelines and descriptions of how to train or practice skills to enhance tree crop propagation, improvement and management.

The manual should help farmers decide which kinds of trees to plant to fit their circumstances and which improvement strategy is most appropriate for them. It suggests ways of teaming up and co-operating with other interested farmers to better share their knowledge and skills as well as to reduce marketing costs. The manual emphasizes new roles and responsibilities for extension staff and farmers. The extension staff should coordinate, facilitate and manage the extension process; the farmers should become the trainers, developing and disseminating their practical skills.

The manual is modular in format. It provides guidelines for practical training on specific subjects that farmers want and need. The modules and options can thus be adjusted to site-specific and farmer-specific needs.

Our hope is that it will contribute to an increased understanding of the skills and management practices needed for growing fruit and tree crops. This understanding can in turn contribute to improve the quality of life of farm households. The tree crops can provide additional food for subsistence, be a source of income, and supply medicinal, ecological and ornamental values into the future.

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Abbreviations

GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
HCDA	Horticultural Crops Development Authority
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
MoARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development