



Farmer Field Schools & education for ecological FAW management with farmers

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Educate and innovate with farmers on sustainable FAW management



- Once FAW has settled, it is there to stay and cannot be eradicated
- For resource-poor farmers - promote preventative, sustainable, low-cost measures... but agro-ecosystem based approaches can be more complex
- Need to educate and innovate WITH farmers... Yet reach scale !

Need a blend of approaches



Farmer Field Schools

Field exposures/courses



Plant health rallies



Workshops

Need a blend of approaches



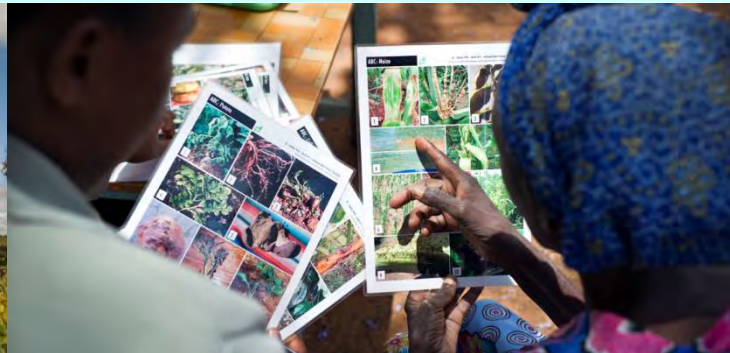
Film Screenings



Radio



Mobile messaging



Print



- **Farmer Field Schools : a group of 15-25 farmers/pastoralists/fisherfolks/foresters who meet weekly/regularly during crops growing season (4-5 months)... or animal cycle (up to 18 months)**
- **Observations and run experimental fields with farmers – ‘the field is the book’**
- **FFS trainings on FAW (FAO and non)**
in 40+ countries



FFS is learning by doing - a learning process

**Based on
experiential
learning & Action
research**

(Kolb, Reason, Heron,
Stringer)

Observe & Record



**Field
observation
every 2-3
days after
emergence
is critical!**



Act



Analyze

Discuss & Decide

Photos: Raf Somers

Experiments: Insect Zoos

Observing to understand
trophic levels &
food webs



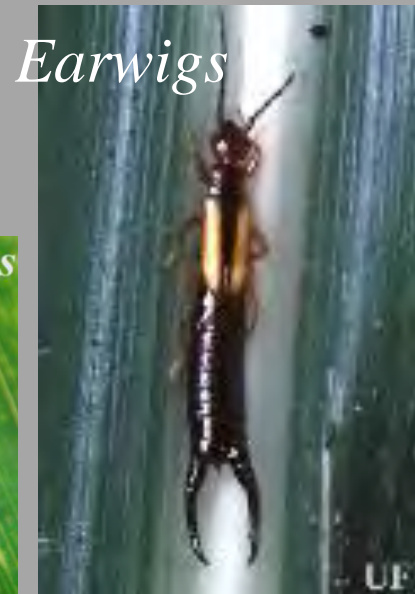
Trichogramma

Who eats whom?

FAW has a lot of natural
enemies that must be
preserved!



Telenomus remus



Earwigs

Experiments: Defoliation studies

Voluntary maize defoliation studies
in FFS, simulating FAW damage
... to study maize ability to
compensate foliar damage
at various stages

**Doing basic science
with farmers**



Field studies : Soil health & fertilization

Understanding
effect of fertilizer rates/
manure on FAW
oviposition and
Infestation levels



Also : effect of botanicals, sand, ash...

Field studies : Plant diversity

FFS experiment with effect of polyvarieties, mixed cropping to reduce oviposition

Flowers and trees as habitat for natural enemies

Trap and repellent crops (e.g. push pull is promising, Midega 2018)



Healthy Push-pull field in Uganda in heavily FAW-infested farm

Photo ICIPE 2017

FFS/extension activities on FAW

- FFS FAW Guide on Integrated management of the FAW through FFS 2018
- Regional trainings for 450+ Master Trainers
- National FAW course for 14,100+ FFS facilitators in 40+ countries - Burkina, Cabo Verde, Ethiopia, India, Nepal, Nigeria, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Uganda, Phillipines, Vietnam, Zimbabwe.....
- 350,000 farmers trained through season-long FFS through FAO
- FAW page on Global FFS Platform, FFS FAW Whatsapp group, FAO monthly coordination meeting, Technical Working Group on Education and Communication led by CABI



Refresher courses for FFS facilitators/extension to integrate FAW topics into FFS & extension



- Short (3 to 6 days) course on FAW for experienced Master Trainers and existing FFS facilitators
- Facilitators can conduct both FFS AND 1-2 days field courses



Season-long Training for new Facilitators (TOF)



Land Preparation



Planting



Follow up the growth



Harvest



FFS Master
Trainer



FFS
Facilitator

Crop or enterprise specific, for an entire season/cycle

Organized by Master trainers (+resource people)

35 to 90 days of training

Technical + facilitation skills + group strengthening

Practical and applied training

Courtesy RAB/BTC

Training of farmers through...



☐ Farmer Field Schools:

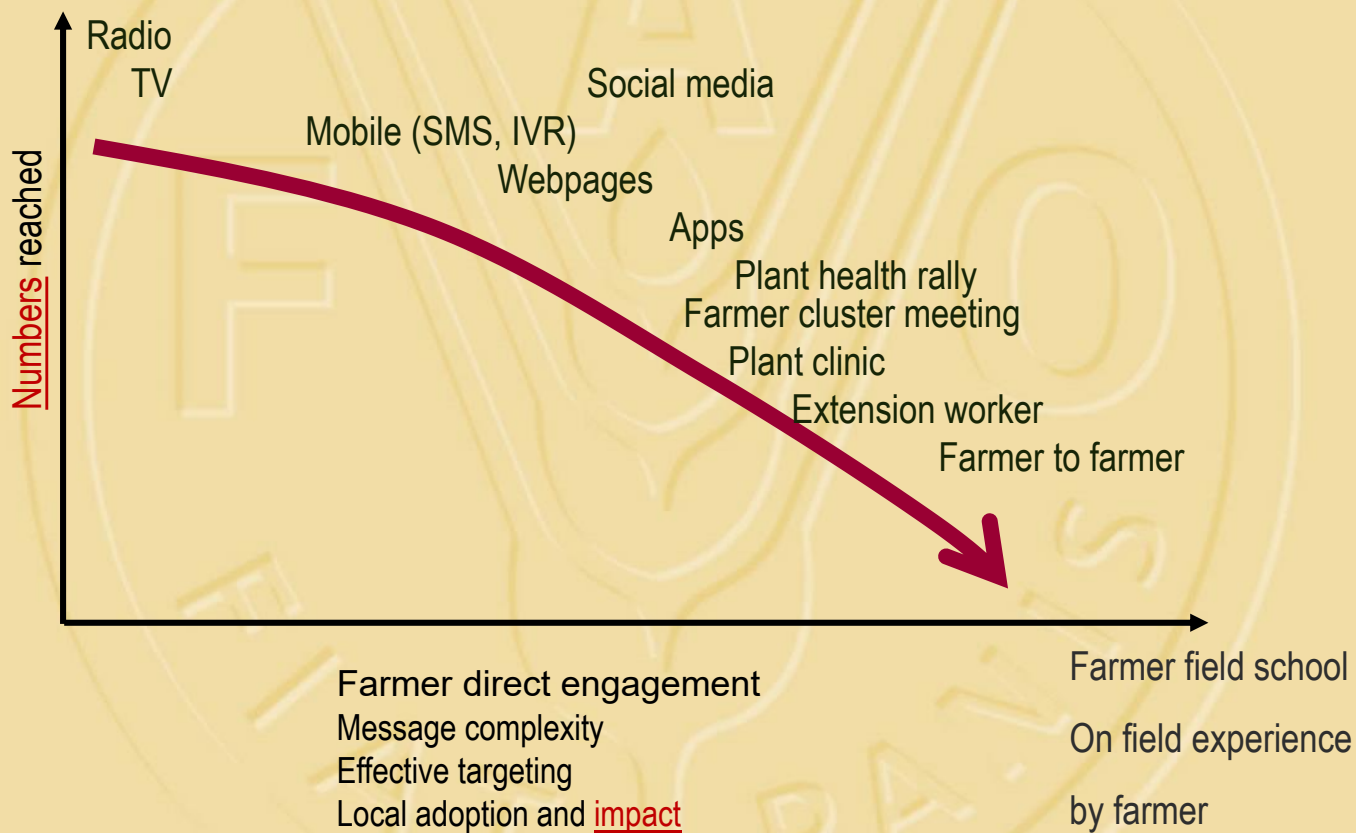
- integrate FAW topics (where relevant !) in FFS on maize, possibly other crops
- partner and provide technical info on FAW to FAO and non-FAO projects conducting extension/FFS activities

☐ 1-2 day village crash courses

- Experience-based, looking for FAW and natural enemies in fields...
- Can be facilitated by extension workers, or FFS facilitators on the days when they don't facilitate FFS

☐ Social media, Videos, Massive information campaigns

Impact and sustainability of different training and education approaches



COVID-19 - opportunity for better advisory services ?

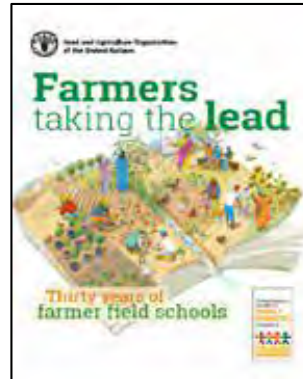
- Digitalization evolved even faster. Will advisory services evolve fast enough, or be left behind?
- Role of extension to facilitate interactions, not only disseminate good practices
- Need E-powerment of farmers ! Not a black box
- Develop new skills sets
- Go local ! Local solutions for local problems
- Youth, migrant workers more exposed to technology!
- A single institution/approach cannot do this partnerships, networks
- Balance between in-person, field learning and ICTs





Running farmer field schools in times of COVID-19: a resource handbook

[English, French, Spanish, Arabic](#)



Farmers taking the lead : 30 years of FFS

[English, French](#)

NEW ! FFS, gender equality, social inclusion and community empowerment
[English](#)



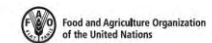
Posters on precaution measures against COVID-19 in FFS

[English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Sorbian, Arabic, Urdu](#)



FFS Guidance Document – Planning for quality programmes

[English, French, Portuguese, Russian](#)



Farmer Field Schools Gender Equality, Social inclusion and Community Empowerment

EXPERIENCES FROM UGANDA (KARAMOJA SUB-REGION)
Case study



Global Farmer Field School Platform

- Home
- Overview**
- Regional Activities
- News and Events
- Library
- Experts roster
- Partners
- Members area

- FFS and Fall ArmyWorm**
- FFS and social inclusion
- Success Stories

FFS and Ecological management of Fall ArmyWorm



Fall armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*), FAW, is an insect native to tropical and subtropical regions of the Americas. Its larval stage (photo) feeds on more than 80 plant species, including maize, rice, sorghum, millet, sugarcane, vegetable crops and cotton. FAW can cause significant yield losses if not well managed. It can have a number of generations per year and the moth can fly up to 100 km per night. FAW was first detected in Central and Western Africa in early 2016 (Benin, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, and Togo) and subsequently, in the whole of mainland Southern Africa (except Lesotho and the Island States), in Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Ghana, Niger, Ethiopia, Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda, and it is expected to go further. Its modality of introduction, along with its biological and ecological adaptation across Africa are still speculative. FAW is a dangerous transboundary pest with a high potential of continuing to spread due to its natural distribution capacity and trade. Farmers will need great support to sustainably manage FAW in their cropping systems through Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has taken a lead role in convening partners and in organizing consultation meetings resulting in a region-wide multi-stakeholder "Framework for the Coordinated Management of Fall Armyworm in Africa". One of FAO's key next steps for FAW work in Africa is "to support the design and implementation of a sustainable and ecological pest management programme for smallholder farmers in Africa, after looking at the experiences of farmers and researchers from the Americas" who have been living with the pest for several hundred years. Recommended management practices will be tried and adapted in the field via Farmers' Field Schools (FFS) with farmers and farmers' organizations across Africa, in collaboration with research and advisory services. Experiences and successes will be documented and shared to refine management options.

Some next steps

What activities on extension/ FFS / communication are planned in your programme? What works and doesn't?



- Mechanisms for **info sharing /lessons learning**
 - Join the Whatsapp group on FAW FFS/extension
 - Join the Global Technical Working group on Education and Communication with CABI, FAO, Farm Radio and others
 - Share with FAO Plant Production and Protection and (Sub) Regional Offices your extension activities



THANK YOU !

The Global FFS platform
www.fao.org/farmer-field-schools/home-en



Thirty years of
farmer field schools

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