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RE-GAIN: ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING MANUAL

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Supported by:



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Introduction

Overview of the RE-GAIN: Enterprise Development Training Manual

PROJECT SUMMARY

Smallholder farmers face significant challenges in managing post-harvest food loss, which undermines their productivity and income. Limited access to advanced farming solutions, such as proper storage facilities, storage bags, drying equipment, and modern preservation techniques, worsens the issue. Financial constraints and lack of technical knowledge further hinder their ability to adopt innovations that could minimise losses and enhance food security. Consequently, these obstacles perpetuate a cycle of inefficiency and economic struggle for small-scale farmers.

The RE-GAIN program, Scaling solutions for food loss in Africa, aims to address the impacts of climate change on harvest and post-harvest food losses in seven African countries: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. The program focuses on strengthening food security by supporting the innovative adaptation of the harvest and post-harvest value chain. It seeks to reduce food loss, improve food quality, enhance local capacity, and mitigate climate risks through large-scale adoption of Food Loss-Reduction Solutions (FL-RS) by smallholder farmers. The program operates across three primary pathways: farmer-centric, supplier-centric, and institutional support.

An important component of market development for FL-RS is the provision of smart subsidies that benefit smallholder farmers by providing access to more affordable products and services. AGRA will (partially) procure FL-RS for further distribution to smallholder farmers. To ensure impact delivery, the smart subsidies will only be released upon delivery of FL-RS to eligible farmers.

INTRODUCTION

Impuls Africa, in collaboration with AGRA Zambia under the RE-GAIN project, has developed an Enterprise Development Training Curriculum tailored for smallholder farmers. This curriculum is specifically designed to address critical factors contributing to post-harvest food loss in targeted districts within the Eastern, Central, and Southern Provinces of Zambia. Its primary goal is to equip farmers with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively manage their economic activities, particularly through the adoption of modern farming equipment to minimise food loss.

The Enterprise Development Curriculum is structured to support MSEs, SMEs, VBAs, and youth in empowering smallholder farmers with essential business skills. These skills are instrumental in achieving the project's overarching objectives. By the conclusion of this training, smallholder farmers are expected to:

- Establish or Expand Income-Generating Activities (IGAs): Farmers will gain the ability to either initiate new income-generating ventures or strategically expand their existing businesses, particularly those focused on post-harvest equipment.

5 Overview of the RE-GAIN Training Manual

- **Make Informed Financial Decisions:** Participants will learn to make prudent choices regarding earning, spending, and investing in Morden farming equipment.
- **Effectively Manage Cash Flow:** Farmers will be equipped to oversee the flow of money in and out of their businesses and households.
- **Enhance Profitability and Handle Financial Challenges:** The curriculum will prepare participants to manage profitability, control business expenses, and navigate unforeseen financial challenges.
- **Promote Inclusive Collaboration:** Farmers will be trained to work positively with youth and women, while effectively managing expectations related to business operations and financial control.

AUDIENCE DESCRIPTION

This curriculum was developed specifically for AGRA Zambia and its implementing partners under the RE-GAIN project. Tailored to its intended audience, the curriculum emphasises adult learning for SMEs, agro-dealers, and VBAs. Participants are required to have basic oral numeracy skills and an interest in starting or expanding income-generating activities to engage in this training effectively.

Trainers should be prepared to adjust for participants with limited numeracy skills, such as pairing them with individuals who possess stronger numeracy abilities. The only other prerequisite for this course is that participants must be registered as SMEs, agro-dealers, or VBAs and have a desire to enhance their business skills.

To ensure their success, VBA's, SMEs, and Agro dealers should possess the following characteristics:

- Be literate and numerate.
- Show interest in advancing the income generation of small-holder farmers.
- Having practical experience working in or running their own small business is not required but is preferable.

All trainers must be willing to prepare for sessions in advance of meetings and to engage participants using key training techniques during sessions. Trainers are expected to complete a Training of Trainers workshop, delivered by Impuls Africa. They must also comply with all project-specific safeguarding and ESMS policies.

LENGTH OF TRAINING

The training is designed to be delivered over a period of three (3) days and is structured around four (4) key stages of business growth based on the International Labour Organisation Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) framework. These stages, namely Generate Your Business Idea (GYB), Start Your Business (SYB), Improve Your Business (IYB), and Expand Your Business (EYB), provide a practical and progressive pathway for enterprise development. Participants are guided from identifying and refining viable business ideas, to establishing and managing their enterprises effectively and ultimately to improving performance and scaling operations.

TRAINING AND LEARNING METHODOLOGY

This training manual has been designed using an applied learning methodology and aligns with Gagne’s 9 Events of Instruction.¹ In this methodology, participants build their skills and knowledge through practice by following a systematic four-step approach through each session. Through this approach, participants use knowledge and skills as they acquire them so they can implement them on their own after meetings.

The role of the trainer is not to be the source of “all knowledge” but to help facilitate the learning process by providing demonstrations, coaching, feedback, and support. They fulfil this role by:

- Not lecturing or providing excess information
- Creating an environment in which all participants can actively engage.
- Ensuring that all participants can see and hear the demonstrations.
- Providing hands-on opportunities to practice and experience key learning points.
- Managing time and the overall learning environment
- Preparing session materials in advance of each session delivery (average of 20 minutes of preparation per session).

The Advisor’s Guide uses techniques designed to help the advisor fulfil his or her role while engaging participants. These techniques include:

- *Whole group discussions:* The advisor brings all participants together to explore a new topic and interact with others.
- *Small group activities:* As a variation, participants are divided into small groups to discuss scenarios or questions related to a key learning point.
- *Demonstrations:* The advisor demonstrates how to carry out each task the participants are expected to carry out.
- *Practical exercises:* Participants apply key skills through activities such as case studies.
- *Work in pairs:* Participants work in pairs or small teams to discuss topics in detail and to share their own experiences.

Individual Reflections: Participants are invited to consider different topics in relation to their own learning and life

PURPOSE OF THIS TRAINING MANUAL

The purpose of the training guide is threefold:

- Equip facilitators with clear session structures, step-by-step facilitation instructions, and trainer notes for each topic on Food Loss-Reduction Solutions (FL-RS) in Postharvest Management
- Provide practical exercises, case studies, and tools that participants can immediately apply in their FL-RS enterprises.
- Support consistent, high-quality delivery of Business Development Solutions (BDS) training for Scaling Solutions for Food Loss in Africa under the RE-GAIN project - in Zambia.

¹ Gagne, R.M. and Briggs, L.J. Principles of Instructional Design, 2nd Ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

This comprehensive guide is for facilitators and participants engaged in business development training for Food Loss Reduction Solution (FL-RS) enterprises across Zambia. Each module includes clear objectives, realistic time requirements, required materials, practical facilitation guidance, and engaging exercises that participants can complete immediately.

OVERVIEW FOR TRAINERS

Welcome to the business development training guide. It has been designed for use by Impuls to train SMEs, VBAs and Agro dealers on foundational business concepts.

This guide is divided into 10 sessions lasting between 60-90 minutes each. The sessions in this guide help encourage discussion among participants while adding new knowledge and providing participants with opportunities to apply fresh concepts.

The activities in this guide follow a common format. Each session begins with an Activity Box that will help you with the session's purpose.

CORE FACILITATION PRINCIPLES

This guide is built on six evidence-based principles:

- Experience First – Ask what participants already know before introducing new concepts
- Show, Don't Tell – Use real products, actual calculations, and hands-on demonstrations
- Use Local Language – Switch to local languages whenever clarity requires it
- Short and Active Sessions – Never speak for more than 30 minutes without an exercise
- Market-Focused – Build real, self-sustaining businesses from day one
- Inclusive – Actively involve women and youth with equal participation.

Stage 1: Generate your Business Idea

Stage 1 establishes entrepreneurial mindset and helps participants identify and screen viable FL-RS business opportunities. This foundation is critical, untested ideas often fail.

Module 1: ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOUNDATIONS

Activity Box	
Learning Objective	- Define what an entrepreneur is in their own words. - Distinguish between a structured business and a casual income activity. - Identify risks that are specific to rural agribusiness. - Explain the key challenges and opportunities of rural agribusiness.
Time required	90 minutes
Materials	Flipchart and markers, printed case study cards (one per group), whiteboard, or large paper

Facilitation Tip: Start with a question, not a lecture. Ask: “Who here has ever sold something and made a profit?” Almost every hand will go up. Build from there. The goal of this module is to shift thinking from “I sell things when I can” to “I run a business that consistently generates income.” Avoid giving a dictionary definition of entrepreneurship. Instead, draw it out from participants using the exercise below.

Preparing to Start a Business

Preparing for a business isn’t about doing everything at once. It’s about getting the fundamentals right so you don’t waste time, money, or effort once you start.

Here’s a simple way to think about it:

- **Clarify the idea** – What exactly are you offering, and what problem are you solving?
- **Understand the market** – Who are your customers, and who else is already doing this?
- **Define your value** – Why should someone choose your product or service over others?
- **Plan your finances** – Estimate startup costs, pricing, and how you’ll make a profit
- **Sort legal basics** – Register the business, get any required licenses or permits
- **Set up operations** – Decide how you’ll produce, deliver, and manage the business
- **Test before scaling** – Start small, validate demand, and adjust based on feedback

That’s really the core: be clear, be realistic, and test before committing heavily.

Where are you in your business cycle?

Who is an entrepreneur?

An entrepreneur is someone who:

- **Sees a problem** that other people have
- **Creates a solution** to that problem
- **Organises resources** (money, skills, time, people) to deliver that solution
- **Takes a calculated risk, meaning** they think carefully before acting
- **Earns a profit** by selling that solution to people who need it



FIGURE 1: PRODUCT DEMONSTRATION

Anyone can be an entrepreneur. You do not need a university degree. You do not need a large sum of money. You need a good idea, the willingness to learn, and the commitment to work consistently.

Business vs Income Activity

Many rural residents earn money through seasonal activities. But there is a critical difference between income activities and structured businesses:

- Structured businesses maintain regular stock, keep written records, calculate prices based on costs, plan cash flow, build customer loyalty, and rely on planning
- Income activities sell when stock is available, keep no records, guess prices, stop when money runs out, have no clear customers, and depend on luck

The goal of this training is to help you move from **income activity** to **structured business** especially for FL-RS.

10 Stage 1: Generate your Business Idea

Opportunities and Challenges of Rural Businesses

Rural FL-RS enterprises face both opportunities and challenges. Opportunities include: a large number of farmers losing harvests; growing awareness of technologies; limited competition; RE-GAIN project support; and government priority on value chains. Challenges include: seasonal demand; limited farmer cash outside growing season; poor infrastructure; low awareness; and farmer distrust of new products.



EXERCISE 1.1: Entrepreneurial Self-Assessment

Individual work – 15 minutes

Complete the self-assessment in your workbook. For each statement, circle YES or NO honestly. Count YES answers. Your score shows strengths and areas to develop. This is not pass/fail—it is information for your growth.

Question	YES / NO
I have identified a problem that farmers in my area face	
I have tried to solve that problem before	
I am willing to invest my own money in a new business idea	
I can keep simple financial records	
I am comfortable talking to suppliers and negotiating prices	
I am willing to work hard even when results are slow at first	
I learn from mistakes rather than giving up	
I treat my customers with respect even when they complain	
I can separate my business money from my personal money	
I am willing to ask for help when I don't know something	

Count your YES answers:

- **8-10:** You have strong entrepreneurial qualities. Build on them.
- **5-7:** You have a good foundation. Focus on the areas you answered NO to.
- **Below 5:** This training will help you build the mindset and skills you need. Be honest with yourself about what you need to work on.

11 Stage 1: Generate your Business Idea



EXERCISE 1.2: Entrepreneur Stories-Group Discussion

CASE STUDY: Margaret from Nangoma

Margaret is 38 years old. She grows Maize on 2 hectares in Nangoma. Every year, she loses about 15% of her harvest to pests and moisture in traditional bags. She spends K200 each season buying chemicals that only partially work.

One day, a VBA visited her village and demonstrated hermetic storage bags. Margaret was interested but could not afford the K200 for a 100kg bag. She noticed that most of her neighbours felt the same way.

Margaret saw an opportunity. She approached a supplier in Mumbwa town. She negotiated to buy 30 bags at K67 each (K2,010 total). She sold them to her neighbours at K100 each. She made K33 per bag making gross profit of K990 on her first order.

Today, Margaret earns more from selling FL-RS than from growing soybeans.

Discussion Questions:

1. What problem did Margaret identify?
2. What resources did she organize?
3. What risk did she take?
4. What made her different from a farmer who simply complained about losses?
5. What can you learn from Margaret's approach?

Module 2: IDENTIFYING FL-RS BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Activity Box

Learning Objective

- Understanding the cropping calendar
- Describe the key post-harvest challenges in their area
- Identify at least one viable FL-RS business opportunity
- Explain the difference between Model 1 (Sales-Based) and Model 2 (Service-Based) enterprises.

Time required

120 minutes

Materials

Physical samples (hermetic bags, tarpaulin, moisture meter), flipchart with value chain diagram, product information sheets

Facilitation Tip: This is critical. Many businesses fail due to enthusiasm rather than analysis.

Screening helps participants think clearly about viability before investing. Be honest when ideas score low, encourage adjustment, not abandonment.

12 Stage 1: Generate your Business Idea

Understanding Our Cropping Calendar

The cropping calendar is a practical tool that allows farmers to plan and structure the use of agricultural machinery and equipment throughout the year and, therefore, their profitability. The cropping calendar considered here is for rainfed field crops generally grown by smallholder farmers in Zambia. In general, most field crops are grown in the rainy season from November to March. There may be no significant differences in crop calendars of different field crops across agro-ecological regions. However, there may be significant differences in the crop calendars of some crops, which may be influenced by the length of the growing period. The table below shows the national cropping calendars for maize and soya beans cultivated by smallholder farmers.

Stage	Crop	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Land Preparation	Maize	•	•	•										
	Soya	•	•	•										
Planting	Maize				•	•	•							
	Soya				•	•	•							
Crop Management	Maize					•	•	•	•					
	Soya					•	•	•	•					
Maturity & Harvesting	Maize									•	•	•		
	Soya									•	•	•		
Post-harvest Handling	Maize										•	•	•	
	Soya										•	•	•	
Marketing	Maize											•	•	•
	Soya											•	•	•

Source: National Agriculture Mechanisation Strategy - 2024 to 2028

The Post-Harvest Challenge

Zambia loses an estimated 360,000 metric tonnes of maize every year to post-harvest losses. That is equivalent to 17% of total production. For soybeans, losses range from 20% to 40%.

Losses occur due to: poor drying (moisture causes mould); inadequate storage (traditional sacks); slow threshing (grain damage); poor transport (spillage and contamination); poor market timing (forced low-price sales due to inability to store safely).

The Two FL-RS Business Models

- **Model 1 (Sales-Based):** You stock and sell FL-RS products directly to farmers. Example: agro-dealer selling hermetic bags, tarpaulins, moisture meters. Profit = Retail Price minus Total Cost.
- **Model 2 (Service-Based):** You own equipment and provide services to farmers. Example: cooperative offering mechanical shelling, grain storage rental, and moisture testing. Profit = Service Fees minus Operating Costs.

Every bag of grain lost is income that a farmer never receives. FL-RS technologies can prevent most of these losses.

13 Stage 1: Generate your Business Idea



EXERCISE 2.1: Mapping FL-RS Opportunities in Your Area

Group Work - 20 minutes (groups of 4 - 5)

In your group, discuss and complete the opportunity mapping worksheet. Identify main crops, biggest post-harvest problems you observe, available FL-RS products, what's missing, what farmers would likely buy. Be specific, reference actual villages and farmers you know. Present findings to full group.

Question	Your Answer
What crops do most farmers grow in your area?	
What are the biggest post-harvest problems you see?	
Are any FL-RS products already available in your area?	
Who is selling them (if anyone)?	
What is missing from the market?	
What do you think farmers would pay for?	
What FL-RS products or services would YOU consider?	

OPPORTUNITY MAPPING WORKSHEET.

Screening FL-RS Business Ideas

ANALOGY

Starting a business without screening is like planting a seed without testing the soil. You may work very hard and still fail because the conditions were not right from the start.

Screening your idea means asking honest questions:

- Is there real demand, or am I assuming demand?
- Can my target customers actually afford this?
- Do I have or can I develop the skills needed?
- Is the profit potential worth the effort and risk?

14 Stage 1: Generate your Business Idea

The FL-RS Business Screening Matrix

Use the FL-RS Business Screening Matrix below to evaluate your idea. Score each factor 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). Factors include: Demand, Affordability, Competition, Your Skills, Capital Required, Profit Potential, Risk Level, and Community Support.

Score Interpretation: 32–40 = Excellent viability; 24–31 = Good potential; 16–23 = Moderate; Below 16 = High risk.

Criterion	What to Consider	Score (1–5)
Demand	How many farmers in my area need this? Is demand consistent or seasonal?	
Affordability	Can target farmers afford to pay the price required for me to make profit?	
Competition	Is anyone else already doing this nearby? How strong are they? (Low competition = higher score)	
Skills Match	Do I have the skills to sell/service this? Can I learn quickly?	
Capital Required	How much startup money do I need? Is it realistic for me? (Lower capital = higher score)	
Profit Potential	Based on rough numbers, can this make meaningful profit?	
Risk Level	What are the main risks? How manageable are they? (Lower risk = higher score)	
Family/Community Support	Will my family support this? Does the community trust me to provide this service?	



EXERCISE 2.2: Screening Your FL-RS Business Idea

Individual - 30 minutes, then pair discussion

Choose one FL-RS opportunity. Honestly, complete the screening matrix above. A low score does not mean "don't do it", it means "address these areas first." Share score with partner. Discuss two weakest areas and identify ways to strengthen each.

15 Stage 1: Generate your Business Idea



FIGURE 2: FL-RS SCREENING

Stage 2: Start your Business

Stage 2 moves from mindset to mechanics. This stage helps participants understand their market, learn correct costing and pricing, analyse break-even position, and assess readiness to start.

MODULE 3: MARKET ANALYSIS AND VALUE CHAINS

Activity Box	
Learning Objective	• Draw a basic FL-RS value chain for their area • Identify their key customer segments • Understand what drives and limits farmer purchasing decisions
Time required	90 minutes
Materials	Large paper for value chain mapping (one per group), coloured markers, sticky notes

Facilitation Tip: Value chain mapping works best when participants draw it themselves. Give each group a large sheet of paper and ask them to draw the journey of maize or soybeans from harvest to final sale. Then ask where losses happen and who could provide solutions. This visual exercise typically generates excellent discussion.

Understanding The FL-RS Value Chain

A value chain shows everyone involved in getting a product from production to the final customer. Understanding this chain helps you see where you fit, who your suppliers are, and who your customers are.

Value chain stages where FL-RS helps: Harvest/threshing (mechanical threshers reduce grain damage); Drying (tarpaulins enable cleaner, faster drying); Storage (hermetic bags eliminate pests for 12+ months); Grading & testing (moisture meters confirm quality); Market sale (better-stored grain commands premiums).

17 Stage 2: Start your Business

Value Chain Stage	Where FL-RS Helps	Your Business Role
Harvest (threshing/shelling)	Mechanical thresher reduces grain damage by up to 12%	Model 2: Service provider
Drying	Tarpaulins give cleaner, faster drying; the moisture meter confirms readiness	Model 1: Product seller
Storage	Hermetic bags eliminate pests without chemicals for 12+ months	Model 1: Product seller
Grading & Testing	A moisture meter is used by buyers and sellers to confirm quality	Model 1 & 2: Product/service
Market sale	Better-stored grain commands a quality premium	Both models support



FIGURE 3: MAIZE VALUE CHAIN, POST-HARVESTING

Understanding Your Customers

Not all farmers are the same. Different farmer segments have different needs, ability to pay, and priorities. Key segments include: small-scale farmers (most common, limited cash, prefer 50kg bags); medium-scale farmers (growing commercial orientation, interested in quality storage); large-scale farmers and aggregators (anchor customers for bulk orders); farmer groups and cooperatives (collective buying power, strong word-of-mouth).

Farmers buy FL-RS when they: have experienced serious losses; have seen another farmer succeed; understand financial benefit (not just told, shown); can afford the product; trust the seller.

Customer Segment	Profile	Your Strategy
Small-Scale Farmers (0–2 MT)	Most common in target districts; limited cash; prefer 50kg bags; often women-headed households; influenced by neighbours; may buy in groups (VSLAs)	Low-cost entry products; group buying options; community demonstrations

18 Stage 2: Start your Business

Customer Segment	Profile	Your Strategy
Medium-Scale Farmers (2–5 MT)	Growing commercial orientation; more likely to invest in quality storage; interested in quality premium; can afford tarpaulins and moisture meters	100kg bags, full product range; demonstrate financial ROI
Large-Scale Farmers & Aggregators (5+ MT)	Smaller number but larger purchases; understand cost-benefit clearly; may want bulk discount; anchor customers for Model 2 services	Bulk pricing; reliability; formal agreements such as Aggregator-farmer group agreements (cluster-based access); Seasonal contracts aligned to harvest and marketing cycles; Pay-as-you-use agreements (for shared or service-based models); Medium-scale supply agreements (volume-based commitments); Service-level agreements (SLAs) for installation, maintenance, and after-sales support etc.
Farmer Groups & Cooperatives	Collective buying power; can afford shared equipment (Model 2); decision-making involves group discussion; strong word-of-mouth	Group demonstrations; group credit options

What Drives Farmers to Buy FL-RS?

Farmers buy FL-RS when they:

- Have experienced serious losses and are ready for change
- Have seen another farmer succeed with the technology
- Understand the financial benefit (not just told, but shown)
- Can afford the product (or access a payment plan)
- Trust the seller

What Stops Farmers from Buying?

- No cash at the time (especially pre-harvest)
- Don't believe losses are as bad as claimed
- Have received government handouts and expect free products
- Lack of confidence in a new technology
- Cultural preferences for traditional methods
- Distance to the shop or service provider



EXERCISE 3.1 Value Chain Mapping

Group Work - 25 minutes

Draw the maize or soya value chain in your area on large paper. Mark with red X where losses typically occur. Circle with green where FL-RS products/services could address losses. Star your business position. Write names of real suppliers, buyers, organizations in each stage. Present to full group and compare maps across districts.



EXERCISE 3.2: Know Your Customer

Individual work – 15 minutes

Think of three actual farmers in your community. Describe each: approximate farm size, main crop, current storage method, estimated income per season, biggest post-harvest problem, affordability assessment, what would make them buy. Reflect: what do the three farmers have in common? What differs? How does this affect how you'd sell to each one?

MODULE 4: COSTING, PRICING, AND BREAK-EVEN ANALYSIS

Activity Box

Learning Objective

- Identify all costs associated with their FL-RS business
- Calculate the true cost per unit
- Set a profitable selling price using three methods

Time required

150 minutes

Materials

- Printed costing worksheets, calculators (or phone calculators), flipchart with worked example

Facilitation Tip: Many participants will struggle with the indirect costs and opportunity cost concepts. Spend extra time here. Use very concrete examples. If a participant rents a shop for ZMW 500/month and sells 50 bags/month, that is ZMW 10 per bag help them see this clearly. Do not move forward until most participants understand.

Watch out for: participants who only count supplier purchase price as their cost. This is the most common pricing mistake and the most common reason FL-RS businesses fail to make adequate profit.

Understanding the Full Cost of Business

Many new owners make a critical mistake: they only count the supplier price as their cost. This leads to prices that don't cover all costs and businesses that run at a loss without realising it.

How to Make Money as an FL-RS Agent

Two practical business models-choose one, or run both together

- **Model 1: Sales** — Buy & Sell Hermetic Bags
- **Model 2: Service** — Charge for Shelling



FIGURE 4: SALES AND SERVICE MODELS

MODEL 1: THE SALES MODEL (BUYING AND SELLING FL-RS)

MODEL 1

The Sales Model Buying & Selling i.e. Hermetic Bags

You buy hermetic storage bags at wholesale price and sell them to farmers at a higher price. Your income is the difference between what you pay and what you charge.

21 Stage 2: Start your Business

Know Your Products & Starting Costs

Before setting any price, know exactly what you are paying for each bag at wholesale. These are your two products:

Product	Capacity	Your Wholesale Cost	Who buys it?
Hermetic Bag — Small	50 kg	ZMW 40	Smallholder farmers, 1–2 bags
Hermetic Bag — Large	100 kg	ZMW 53	Larger farmers, cooperatives

WHY THIS MATTERS

ZMW 40 and ZMW 53 are NOT your selling prices. You still need to add transport, overhead and your time before you know what it truly costs you to put that bag in a farmer's hands.

Calculate Your Full Cost Per Bag

Your total cost has three parts. Missing any one of them means you may be selling at a loss without realising it.

Part A: Direct Costs (change with every bag sold)

Cost Item	50 kg Bag	100 kg Bag	Notes
Wholesale price	ZMW 40.00	ZMW 53.00	Fixed per bag
Transport to your location	ZMW 3.00	ZMW 4.00	Divide the trip cost by the number of bags carried
Handling/loading	ZMW 1.00	ZMW 1.50	Estimate your labour time
TOTAL DIRECT COST (A)	ZMW 44.00	ZMW 58.50	

Part B: Indirect / Overhead Costs

Convert monthly overheads into a per-bag cost by dividing by how many bags you expect to sell that month.

Overhead Item	Monthly (ZMW)	Per bag if sell 50/month	Per bag if sell 100/month
Storage / rent	200	4.00	2.00
Phone & airtime	50	1.00	0.50
Loan interest	100	2.00	1.00
Total Overhead/month	350	ZMW 7.00 (B)	ZMW 3.50 (B)

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Part C: Your Time (opportunity cost)

If you spend time running this business, that time has a value. What could you earn doing something else?

Item	Example	Your Number
Daily value of your time	ZMW 80 / day	
Days per month on FL-RS	10 days	
Total time cost/month	ZMW 800 / month	
Time cost per bag (÷ 50 bags)	ZMW 16.00 (C)	

Worked Example: Total Cost for 50 kg Bag

Cost Component	ZMW Amount	Description
Direct Cost (A)	ZMW 44	Per bag, direct
Overhead (B)	ZMW 7	At 50 bags/month
Your Time (C)	ZMW 16	At ZMW 80/day × 10 days
Full Cost (A+B+C)	ZMW 67	True cost per bag

COMMON MISTAKE

Many new sellers think their cost is ZMW 40 (just the wholesale price). Their real cost is ZMW 67. Selling at ZMW 60 feels like a profit of ZMW 20 but is actually a LOSS of ZMW 7 per bag.

Setting Your Selling Price

Three approaches can be used. Use all three as a cross-check, then pick a final price.

Approach 1: Cost-Plus (Your desired profit)

Add your desired profit margin on top of your full cost. This tells you the minimum price you should charge.

Selling Price = Total Cost ÷ (1 – Margin %)

Example (20% margin): ZMW 67 ÷ 0.80

= ZMW 83.75 → round up to ZMW 85

Approach 2: Competitive (market reality check)

Find out what other agro-dealers in your area charge. Make sure your price covers your full cost.

Scenario	50 kg bag	Result
Competitor price	ZMW 90	
Your full cost	ZMW 67	
Profit if you match the competitor	ZMW 23	ZMW 23 profit per bag, good!

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Approach 3: Value-Based (what is it worth to the farmer?)

Help the farmer see the money they save. A farmer who understands the value will accept a higher price.

Farmer's Situation	Calculation	Result
Stores 1,000 kg in 10 × 100 kg bags, worth ZMW 1,500	Loses 15% without hermetic bags	Loss = ZMW 225
Loss per bag (÷ 10 bags)	ZMW 225 ÷ 10	ZMW 22.50 saved per bag
Net saving even at ZMW 75/bag	ZMW 22.50 – ZMW 75 = ...	Farmer still saves ZMW 22.50 net per bag

SALES SCRIPT TIP

"This bag costs ZMW 75. But you will lose ZMW 22.50 worth of grain per bag without it. That means the bag pays for itself and you still keep ZMW 22.50 in your pocket."

Break-Even Analysis: The Minimum You Must Sell

Your break-even is the number of bags you must sell just to cover all costs. Every bag above that number is a profit.

Break-Even Quantity = Fixed Costs ÷ Contribution Margin per Bag
Contribution Margin = Selling Price – Variable (Direct) Cost per Bag

Worked Example: 50 kg Bag at ZMW 85 selling price

Component	Value	How it's calculated
Fixed costs / month	ZMW 1,150	Rent ZMW 200 + Phone ZMW 50 + Loan ZMW 100 + Time ZMW 800
Variable cost / bag	ZMW 44	Direct costs only (Part A)
Selling price / bag	ZMW 85	Cost-plus at 20%
Contribution margin	ZMW 41	ZMW 85 – ZMW 44
Break-Even Quantity	28 bags / month	ZMW 1,150 ÷ ZMW 41 = 28.0

Situation	Result	Meaning
Below 28 bags	LOSS	You're losing money
Exactly 28 bags	ZERO	No profit, no loss
Each bag above 28	+ZMW 41	Pure profit per extra bag
To earn ZMW 1,000	53 bags	$28 + (1,000 \div 41) = 52.4$

Managing Credit Risk

Giving credit to farmers increases your sales. But unpaid credit can destroy your business. Follow these six rules every time.

1. Only give credit to farmers you know and trust personally. Do not give credit to strangers, even with a recommendation.
2. Never give credit on the first purchase. They pay cash first. Credit comes only after they have proven they pay.
3. Always require a deposit of at least 50% before releasing any goods on credit.
4. Set a clear repayment date tied to harvest sales — e.g. "You pay within 30 days of selling your crop."
5. Keep a written credit record signed by both parties. Use a simple book — date, name, amount, due date, signature.
6. Never give credit if you borrowed money to buy your stock. You have your own repayment to meet first.



EXERCISE 4.1: Individual, 30 minutes

Calculate Your Selling Price (Sales Model)

Choose one bag size to sell. Work through each part with a calculator.

Product: _____

Part A — Direct Costs

Item	ZMW per unit
Wholesale price	
Transport	
Handling	
Other	
TOTAL DIRECT COST (A)	

Part B — Overhead (monthly)

Item	Monthly ZMW	Per unit (÷ expected sales)
Rent / storage		
Phone / electricity		
Loan interest		
Other		
TOTAL OVERHEAD PER UNIT (B)		

Part C — Your Time

Item	ZMW
Daily value of my time	
Days per month on FL-RS	
Total per month	
TIME COST PER UNIT (C)	

My Price Decision

Field	Your Answer
Total Cost (A + B + C)	
Cost-plus price at ___% margin	
Competitor price in my area	
Value delivered to farmer	
MY FINAL SELLING PRICE	

Reason for my price: _____

My break-even quantity: _____ bags/month

MODEL 2: CHARGING FOR SERVICES**MODEL 2****The Service Model – Charging for Shelling Services**

You own or hire a shelling machine and charge farmers a fee per kilogram to shell their maize or soya. Your income is a fee for the service, not from selling a product you hold in stock.

Understanding The Service Model

In the service model, farmers bring their harvest to you (or you travel to them), and you shell their grain using a machine. You charge per kilogram processed. You do not need to buy or store any product; your asset is the machine and your skill in operating it.

Aspect	Detail
Your income source	ZMW / kg shelled (or ZMW / hectare served)
Stock needed	None — lower startup risk, no cash tied up in bags
Key limitation	Seasonal — income only at harvest time

Crops covered in this module

Crop	Your Service Fee	Typical Season (Zambia)	Notes
Maize shelling	[ZMW 9 / 65 kg]	April – July	Highest volume crop
Soya bean shelling	[ZMW 40 / 65 kg]	May – August	Harder to shell, slightly higher fee

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Per kg vs. Per hectare — which to use?

Charging method	Pros	Cons	Best for
Per kg (ZMW/kg)	Fair to the farmer pays for what is shelled	Need an accurate scale	Most situations recommended
Per hectare (ZMW/ha)	Simple quote upfront	Yield variations can cause disputes	Flat-field, known yield farmers only

Know Your Full Cost Per Kilogram Shelled

Just like selling bags, your service has costs. Before you set your fee, know every cost so you never shell out at a loss.

Variable Costs (increase with every kg processed)

Cost Item	Maize (ZMW/kg)	Soya (ZMW/kg)	How to calculate
Fuel/electricity			Litres per hour ÷ kg per hour × fuel price
Machine wear & tear			Divide the annual maintenance cost by kg/year
Bags/materials			If you supply bags to the farmer
Assistant labour			Daily wage ÷ kg processed per day
Total Variable Cost per kg (A)			

Fixed Costs (you pay every month regardless)

Cost Item	Monthly (ZMW)	Notes
Machine loan repayment		Your highest fixed cost is whether you work or not
Transport to farms		If you go to the farmer's field
Phone & marketing		Calling farmers, airtime
Your time (opportunity cost)		What you could earn elsewhere
Total Fixed Costs/month (B)		

Worked Example-Maize Shelling

Component	Value	Notes
Service fee (per kg)	[ZMW X / kg]	From your price list
Variable cost (per kg)	ZMW 0.15	Fuel + wear & tear + labour
Contribution margin (per kg)	[ZMW X – 0.15]	Fee minus variable cost

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Component	Value	Notes
Fixed costs/month	ZMW 1,500	Loan + transport + phone + time

Break-Even-How Many Kilograms Must You Shell?

In the service model, break-even is measured in kilograms, not in bags or units. You must shell out enough kg each month to cover your fixed costs before earning any profit.

Break-Even (kg) = Monthly Fixed Costs ÷ (Service Fee per kg – Variable Cost per kg)

Example: ZMW 1,500 ÷ (ZMW 0.50 – ZMW 0.15) = ZMW 1,500 ÷ ZMW 0.35

= 4,286 kg / month to break even

Metric	Value	Notes
Break-even	4,286 kg	Must shell this much before any profit
To earn ZMW 1,000	7,143 kg	(1,500 + 1,000) ÷ 0.35
Profit per extra kg	ZMW 0.35	Every kg above break-even

WHAT IF YOUR FEE IS DIFFERENT?

Insert your actual service fee from the FL-RS price list and recalculate. The formula stays the same, only the numbers change.

Is Your Break-Even Point Achievable? Relate It to Time

4,286 kg sounds like a lot. But let's check if it is actually achievable in a normal working month.

Question	Example Answer	Your Answer
Machine capacity (kg per hour)	500 kg / hour	
Hours of shelling needed for break-even	4,286 ÷ 500 = 8.6 hours / month	
Working days per month in shelling season	20 days	
Average shelling time per day needed	25 minutes per working day	
Hours available per day for shelling	6 hours	
Maximum kg possible per month	6 hrs × 500 kg × 20 days = 60,000 kg	

KEY INSIGHT

In this example, break-even requires only 25 minutes of shelling per day. Every additional hour of

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shelling = $500 \text{ kg} \times \text{ZMW } 0.35 = \text{ZMW } 175$ pure profit. A full 6-hour day generates ZMW 1,050 profit in a single day (above break-even).

Loan Repayment Planning

If you borrowed money to buy a shelling machine, your monthly loan repayment is a fixed cost; it does not go away whether you shell 0 kg or 50,000 kg. This is your most dangerous cost.

Three questions to answer before you take a loan

Question	Formula	Your Number
How many kg must I shell just to cover the loan payment?	$\text{Loan repayment} \div \text{Contribution margin per kg}$	
Is that kg amount achievable in my area?	Compare to local harvest volumes	
How many months do I repay for?	$\text{Total loan} \div \text{monthly payment}$	

Worked Example

Item	Value	Notes
Machine cost	ZMW 12,000	Purchase price
Loan term	12 months	
Monthly repayment (principal only)	ZMW 1,000	$\text{ZMW } 12,000 \div 12$
Contribution margin per kg	ZMW 0.35	Fee – variable cost
Kg to cover the loan payment alone	2,857 kg/month	$\text{ZMW } 1,000 \div \text{ZMW } 0.35$

CRITICAL RISK

Your loan repayment falls due every month, but shelling income comes only during harvest season (3–5 months of the year). In the off-season, you must save enough from peak earnings to keep paying the loan. Before taking a loan, calculate how much you must save every month during harvest to cover all off-season payments.

Off-Season Savings Target Formula

Monthly savings needed during peak season =
 $(\text{Monthly loan payment} \times \text{Off-season months}) \div \text{Peak season months}$

Example: $(\text{ZMW } 1,000 \times 7 \text{ off-season months}) \div 5 \text{ peak months}$

= ZMW 1,400 must be saved every peak month for the loan alone

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Seasonality – Your Biggest Business Risk

Unlike the sales model (which you can run year-round), the service model earns income mainly at harvest time. This creates a cycle of high income and zero income that you must plan for.

The Shelling Year - Maize & Soya (Zambia)

Jan Off- season	Feb Off- season	Mar Off- season	Apr PEAK	May PEAK	Jun PEAK	Jul Good	Aug Good	Sep Low	Oct Off- season	Nov Off- season	Dec Off- season
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Five Strategies to Manage Seasonal Risk

Strategy	How to do it	Impact
1. Save 30% of every peak payment	Open a separate savings account. Move 30% of every service payment directly into it. Do not touch it until the off-season.	Covers fixed costs during 7 low months
2. Combine with Model 1 (bag sales)	Sell hermetic bags during planting season (Jan–Mar) when farmers are preparing for harvest. Zero shelling income, but bag sales keep cash flowing.	Smooths income across the whole year
3. Serve multiple villages	Farmers in different areas harvest at slightly different times. Widening your service area extends your shelling season by 2–4 extra weeks.	More kg, longer season
4. Negotiate harvest-aligned loan terms	When taking a machine loan, ask the lender for seasonal repayment terms — higher payments April–August, lower or zero payments October–March.	Reduces off-season cash pressure
5. Track your seasonal profit target	Before harvest starts, set a ZMW target for the whole season. Divide by expected peak months to get a monthly target. Track weekly.	Prevents under-saving during peak

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Profit Fluctuation: What a Real Month Looks Like

Month	Kg shelled	Revenue (at ZMW 0.50/kg)	Variable cost	Fixed cost	Profit / Loss
March (off)	0	0	0	ZMW 1,500	-ZMW 1,500
April (peak)	15,000	ZMW 7,500	ZMW 2,250	ZMW 1,500	+ZMW 3,750
May (peak)	18,000	ZMW 9,000	ZMW 2,700	ZMW 1,500	+ZMW 4,800
July (tailing)	4,000	ZMW 2,000	ZMW 600	ZMW 1,500	-ZMW 100
October (off)	0	0	0	ZMW 1,500	-ZMW 1,500

THE LESSON FROM THIS TABLE

April and May alone generate ZMW 8,550 combined profit. But if that money is spent immediately, October and November will each drain ZMW 1,500 from your pocket with zero income. Peak season profit must be treated as income for the whole year, not a bonus.



EXERCISE 4.2: Individual, 30 minutes

Calculate Your Service Model Break-Even

Crop: Maize / Soya (circle one)

Your numbers	ZMW
Service fee (from price list, per kg)	
Variable cost per kg (fuel + labour + wear)	
Contribution margin per kg (fee – variable)	
Monthly fixed costs (loan + transport + phone + time)	
BREAK-EVEN (kg per month)	
Machine capacity (kg per hour)	
Hours of shelling needed to break even	
Is this achievable in my area? (Yes / No)	
Kgs I need to shell to earn ZMW 2,000 profit/month	

Seasonality Planning

Field	Your Answer
How many peak months do I have? (April–August)	
Expected total profit during peak season	
Fixed costs during off-season (× off-season months)	
Amount I must save during peak season	

My off-season income plan (Model 1 bags / other): _____

Using Both Models 1 and 2

Using Both Models Together: The Strongest Strategy

The most successful FL-RS agents do not choose one model. They combine both to earn income year-round and reduce the risk of any single income source failing.

Model 1-Sales (Bags)	Model 2-Service (Shelling)
January–March: sell bags as planting approaches September–December: off-season storage advice + bag sales Year-round for any farmer who stores grain No machine needed low startup cost	April–August: peak shelling season, high income Maize April–July, soya May–August Seasonal save aggressively during peak Machine is an asset protect and maintain it

COMBINED INCOME PICTURE

Bag sales cover January–March and September–December. Shelling generates high income April–August. Together, you have 12 months of income activity — not just 5. The two models also reinforce each other: farmers who use your shelling service trust you and are more likely to buy hermetic bags. Farmers who buy bags from you are natural customers for your shelling service at harvest.

Quick Reference Formulas

What you want to know	Formula
Full cost per bag (Sales)	Direct Cost (A) + Overhead per unit (B) + Time per unit (C)
Cost-plus selling price	Total Cost ÷ (1 – Margin %)
Contribution margin (Sales)	Selling Price – Variable Cost per bag
Break-even bags/month	Monthly Fixed Costs ÷ Contribution Margin per bag
Contribution margin (Service)	Service Fee per kg – Variable Cost per kg
Break-even kg/month	Monthly Fixed Costs ÷ Contribution Margin per kg
Hours needed to break even	Break-even kg ÷ Machine capacity (kg/hour)
Monthly savings target (peak season)	(Monthly loan payment × Off-season months) ÷ Peak months
Kg to earn the target profit	(Fixed Costs + Target Profit) ÷ Contribution Margin per kg

Stage 3: Improve your Business

Building a business is one thing. Building a business that consistently performs, earns reliably, and grows sustainably is another. **Stage 3** gives FL-RS enterprise owners the practical systems, financial skills, and marketing approach they need to move from day-to-day survival to deliberate, managed performance.

MODULE 5: RECORD KEEPING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Activity Box	
Learning Objective	
	• Set up and maintain a practical record-keeping system • Calculate basic profit/loss • Manage cash flow • Control costs • Understand the revenue, costs, and profit relationship
Time required	120 minutes
Materials	Record-keeping templates, sample transactions, calculators, flipcharts, and exercise cards with a month of realistic transactions.

Facilitation Tip: Many enterprise owners believe they don't need written records; they can track everything in their heads. Experience shows this is one of the most common reasons small businesses fail to grow. Good records serve three purposes: they tell you if you're making money; they help justify credit or subsidy claims; they allow project partners to verify performance and unlock support.

Why Records Matter

Good records tell you whether your business is actually making money. They help you justify credit applications or subsidy claims. They allow project partners to verify your performance and unlock support. Records do not need to be complicated; a simple exercise book with consistent entries is far more useful than a perfect system never used.

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The Four Records Every FL-RS Enterprise Must Keep

At a minimum, every FL-RS enterprise owner should maintain the following four records:

Daily Sales Record: Records every sale, including the product, quantity, price, and the buyer. This is the most important document in your business; it is the foundation of all other records.

Date	Product Sold	Qty	Unit Price (ZMW)	Total (ZMW)	Customer / Notes
01.04.26	Hermetic Bag (50kg)	5	85.00	425.00	
	Tarpaulin Tent (8x10m)	2	320.00	640.00	
	Moisture Meter	1	1,800.00	1,800.00	
TOTAL					

Stock/Inventory Record: Tracks what you have in stock, what you receive from the supplier, and what you sell or use. A good stock record prevents over-ordering, detects theft, and tells you when to reorder.

Date	Product	Opening Stock	Received	Sold / Used	Closing Stock	Reorder?
	Hermetic Bags 90kg	30	50	25	55	No
	Tarpaulin 8x10m	10	0	3	7	Monitor
	Grain Silos (1 tonne)	3	2	1	4	No

Cash Inflow and Outflow Record (Cash Book): Tracks every time money comes in (from sales) and goes out (for purchases, expenses, and loan repayments). This is the basis for understanding your cash flow position at any time.

Date	Description	Money IN (ZMW)	Money OUT (ZMW)	Balance (ZMW)
	Opening Balance	500.00		500.00
	Sale of 5 hermetic bags	425.00		925.00
	Restock – 20 tarpaulins		3,600.00	-2,675.00
	Collection from the cooperative	2,800.00		125.00

Customer Record: Keeps basic information about your customers, especially bulk buyers, cooperatives, and repeat buyers. This enables follow-up, credit tracking, and targeted selling.

Customer Name	Contact	Location	Product Interest	Last Purchase	Credit Balance



FIGURE 5: RECORDKEEPING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT



EXERCISE 5.1: Build Your Record System

1. In pairs, look at the four record templates in your handout.
2. Using the sample transactions provided on your exercise card, fill in one week's worth of entries in the Daily Sales Record and Cash Book.
3. Compare your completed records with another pair. Discuss: What decisions could you make based on this one week of data?
4. Each participant commits to the one record they will start keeping tomorrow. Write it on your action card.

Financial Management Fundamentals

Financial management does not require an accountant. It requires understanding four key concepts:

- Revenue (all money coming in from sales)
- Costs (everything you spend)
- Profit (Revenue minus Total Costs)
- Cash Flow (money received minus money paid in a period).

Costs are of two types: Fixed Costs (stay the same regardless of sales volume): shop rent, staff salaries, loan repayments, phone subscription. Variable Costs (change with sales volume): cost of bags purchased, transport per delivery, and packaging materials.

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The most important equation: REVENUE minus TOTAL COSTS equals PROFIT. This simple equation tells you everything about your business's health.

REVENUE

–

TOTAL COSTS

=

PROFIT

Costs come in two types:

Cost Type	Definition	FL-RS Examples
Fixed Costs	Costs that stay the same whether you sell or not	Shop rent, staff salaries, loan repayments, phone subscription
Variable Costs	Costs that change with the volume of sales	Cost of hermetic bags purchased, transport per delivery, and packaging materials
Semi-variable Costs	Costs that are partly fixed and partly variable	Electricity (base charge + usage), casual labour



CASE STUDY: Grace's Hermetic Bag Enterprise

Grace sells hermetic bags and tarpaulins from a small agro-dealership. In September, her records showed:

Total Sales Revenue: ZMW 12,400

Cost of Goods Purchased from Supplier: ZMW 7,800

Gross Profit: ZMW 4,600

Fixed Costs (rent ZMW 800 + phone ZMW 100): ZMW 900

Variable Costs (transport ZMW 350 + packaging ZMW 80): ZMW 430

Total Operating Costs: ZMW 1,330

NET PROFIT (September): ZMW 4,600 – ZMW 1,330 = ZMW 3,270

Grace used this figure to compare against August (ZMW 1,980 net profit) and discovered her September promotion of bundled products had significantly increased profitability.

Understanding Cash Flow

Profit and cash are not the same thing. Many businesses are profitable on paper but run out of cash. This happens when customers owe you money, or when you pay for stock before you sell it.

Cash Flow = Money received – Money paid out (in a given period)

Positive cash flow means more came in than went out. Negative cash flow means you have less cash today than you started with, even if your sales were strong.

Common Cash Flow Traps for FL-RS Enterprises:

- Buying too much stock before the selling season, tying up cash.
- Giving extended credit to customers without managing repayments.
- Mixing personal and business money, drawing from the business for household expenses.
- Failing to set aside money for the next order while spending current revenue.



Your cash balance is not your profit. Always track both separately. Profit shows you where you are going. Cash flow shows you whether you can get there.

MODULE 6: BUSINESS PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND MARKETING

Performance monitoring means regularly checking whether your business is doing what you planned. It turns reactive management, reacting to problems after they happen, into proactive management, where you spot trends early and adjust before they become crises.

Activity Box	
Learning Objective	• Develop a simple business performance monitoring system • Track KPIs monthly • Apply practical marketing strategies to increase sales • Develop customer value proposition • Build loyalty
Time required	120 minutes
Materials	Performance tracker template, KPI worksheet, marketing plan template, case studies, value proposition cards, and flipcharts.

Facilitation Tip: Performance monitoring turns reactive management into proactive management. You spot trends early and adjust before they become crises. For most FL-RS enterprises, 5–7 KPIs tracked monthly are sufficient. Introduce a "green, amber, red" system: green = on target, amber = improving, red = declining. This visual approach helps participants quickly identify priority areas.



FIGURE 6: PERFORMANCE MONITORING

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Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

A Key Performance Indicator is a number that tells you how well a specific aspect of your business is performing. It simply means regularly checking whether your business is doing what you planned.

Essential KPIs include: Monthly Revenue (sum of all sales); Gross Profit Margin ((Revenue – Cost of Goods) ÷ Revenue × 100); Stock Turnover (Units Sold ÷ Average Stock Level); Number of Customers Served (unique customers per month); Percentage Subsidized Sales (if applicable); Credit Outstanding (risk from unpaid sales); Cost Ratio (Total Costs ÷ Revenue × 100).

You do not need dozens of indicators. For most FL-RS enterprises, five to seven KPIs, tracked monthly, are sufficient.

KPI	What it Measures	How to Calculate	Target Frequency
Monthly Revenue	Total sales income	Sum of all sales in the month	Monthly
Gross Profit Margin	Profitability after buying stock	$(\text{Revenue} - \text{COGS}) \div \text{Revenue} \times 100$	Monthly
Stock Turnover	How fast are products selling	$\text{Units Sold} \div \text{Average Stock Level}$	Monthly
No. of Customers Served	Market reach	Count unique customers per month	Monthly
% Subsidised Sales	Smart subsidy utilisation	$\text{Subsidised units} \div \text{Total units} \times 100$	Monthly
Credit Outstanding	Risk from unpaid sales	$\text{Total credit given} - \text{Total repaid}$	Weekly
Cost Ratio	Cost efficiency	$\text{Total Costs} \div \text{Revenue} \times 100$	Monthly

Monthly Performance Tracking

Use this simple tracking sheet at the end of each month to record your KPIs and flag any areas needing attention.

RE-GAIN FL-RS Enterprise – Monthly Performance Tracker						
KPI	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Trend	Action Needed?



TEMPLATE: RE-GAIN FL-RS MONTHLY PERFORMANCE TRACKER



CASE STUDY: Thresher Enterprise Monitoring

James runs a small enterprise renting and selling threshers and shellers in Eastern Province. He started tracking five KPIs monthly using a simple notebook.

In Month 3, his stock turnover dropped from 4.2 to 2.1, and his credit outstanding doubled. His monthly revenue had actually increased slightly, so he initially thought things were going well.

Because he was tracking these numbers, he noticed the warning signs early. Investigation revealed two large customers had stopped repaying credit, and slow-moving stock was tying up his cash. He adjusted his credit terms and restructured his stock orders.

By Month 5, stock turnover had recovered to 3.8, and credit outstanding was under control. Without the performance tracker, he says, he would have noticed the problem only when he could no longer afford to restock.

Practical Marketing for FL-RS Enterprises

Marketing is not advertising. It is the practical work of identifying the right customers, reaching them with the right message, at the right time, with a product that meets their needs. In rural Zambia, this requires low-cost, trust-based, community-rooted approaches.

The FL-RS Marketing Mix has four elements:

- Product (What am I selling? What problem does it solve?)
- Price (What is affordable for my market?)
- Place (Where can customers find me?)
- Promotion (How will customers hear about me?).

Element	Key Questions	Practical Application
Product	What am I selling? What problem does it solve?	Know your full product range, features, and the measurable benefits, e.g. hermetic bags reduce storage losses by up to 98%
Price	What is affordable for my market? Am I competitive?	Use cost-plus pricing. Communicate the value, not just the price. Reference subsidy availability for eligible buyers
Place	Where can customers find me? Where do they gather?	Agro-dealer stalls, market days, cooperative meetings, field days, church networks, mobile demonstration points
Promotion	How will customers hear about me?	Word of mouth, community demonstrations, referrals, simple flyers, radio community spots, field days with Impuls Africa

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Sales are seasonal. Marketing activity should align with the agricultural calendar: Oct–Nov (begin awareness campaigns); Dec–Jan (minimal buying, focus on education); Feb–Mar (restock anticipation); Apr–May (peak selling season); Jun–Aug (maximum selling effort); Sep–Oct (review stock, take forward orders).

Month	Agricultural Activity	FL-RS Marketing Focus	Key Message
Oct–Nov	Land preparation, early planting	Begin awareness campaigns, pre-orders	"Prepare now, protect your harvest"
Dec–Jan	Growing season	Minimal buying focus on education	Demonstrations, building relationships
Feb–Mar	Late growing season	Restock in anticipation	"Harvest season is coming, are you ready?"
Apr–May	Harvesting begins	Peak selling season full stock	"Protect what you worked for"
Jun–Aug	Post-harvest, storage	Maximum selling effort, SME sales	"Extend your selling season"
Sep–Oct	Dry season, planning	Review stock, take forward orders	"Start planning next season"



EXERCISE 6.1: Build a Simple Marketing Plan

1. In groups of three, choose one FL-RS product (e.g., hermetic bags, tarpaulins, or a thresher).
2. Identify: (a) your primary customer segment for this product, (b) your key selling message, (c) two specific places you will reach these customers, and (d) one promotion activity you can do within the next 30 days.
3. Present your marketing plan to the group in two minutes. Feedback from the facilitator and peers.
4. Refine and include this in your individual action plan at Stage 4.

Customer Value Proposition

A value proposition is a simple statement of why a customer should buy from you rather than anyone else. It answers three questions: What problem do you solve? How does your product solve it better? What specific benefit can the customer expect?

Weak version: "I sell hermetic bags." Strong version: "I help farmers keep their grain safe for up to 12 months without chemicals."

Selling a hermetic bag once is a transaction. Having a farmer come back year after year, refer their neighbours, and upgrade to a silo when they can afford it, that is a customer relationship. For FL-RS enterprises, building customer relationships is the most cost-effective growth strategy available.

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Value Proposition Element	Weak Version	Strong Version
What you sell	“I sell hermetic bags”	“I help farmers keep their grain safe for up to 12 months without chemicals”
Who it is for	“For anyone with grain”	“For smallholder farmers who lose maize to weevils and moisture every year”
Why choose you	“I am local and cheap”	“I deliver to your doorstep and offer FIFO-registered quality products you can trust”

Customer Retention Practices

Retaining a customer costs significantly less than acquiring a new one. The following practices are low-cost, high-impact approaches for FL-RS enterprises:

Practice	How to Apply It	Expected Outcome
Follow-up visits or calls	Check in with buyers 2–4 weeks after purchase to ask how the product is working	Build trust, get referrals, identify upgrade needs
Product demonstrations at community level	Organise or join field days where farmers can see FL-RS technologies in use	Reduce purchase hesitation, stimulate demand
Loyalty incentives	Offer a small discount or a free item (e.g., a small hermetic bag) for the fifth purchase	Encourage repeat buying and word-of-mouth
Complaint handling	Have a clear process for addressing faulty products replace quickly and without argument	Protect your reputation; dissatisfied customers tell 10 others
Credit management	Offer structured credit only to known customers, with written terms and a clear repayment schedule	Expand sales without cash risk



EXERCISE 6.2: Refine Your Value Proposition

1. Individually, write a three-sentence value proposition for your enterprise using the format: 'I help [customer type] who [problem they face] by providing [your solution] so that they can [benefit they gain].'
2. Share with a partner. Partner's role: ask questions a sceptical customer might ask. Refine your statement based on feedback.
3. Write your final value proposition on your action card. This becomes part of your business marketing materials.



The strongest FL-RS enterprises combine disciplined record-keeping, clear financial understanding, active performance monitoring, smart marketing, and genuine customer relationships. Together, these habits separate businesses that survive from businesses that grow.

Stage 4: Expand your Business

Stage 3 helped you build a stronger, better-run business. **Stage 4** is about deliberately growing it. Growth without planning creates more problems than it solves. Stage 4 gives you tools to plan growth intelligently, access needed finance, connect to larger markets, and build partnerships that multiply impact.

MODULE 7: BUSINESS GROWTH PLANNING AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Activity Box	
Learning Objective	• Develop a structured business growth plan aligned to the FL-RS opportunity • Identify key risks and practical mitigation strategies • Create a simple risk register • Assess growth readiness • Complete a personal business action plan for the next 90 days
Time required	120 minutes
Materials	Growth Planning Canvas template, Risk Register template, case studies of growth successes/failures, flipcharts, and business plan examples.

Business Growth Planning

Growth means different things to different enterprises. For some, it means selling more products in existing locations. For others, it means entering new districts, adding new product lines, or moving up the value chain from selling to also providing storage and processing services. Before growing, you must decide what kind of growth is right for your business at this point in time.

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FIGURE 7: GROWTH PLANNING AND RISK

The Four Directions of Business Growth

Growth Direction	Description	FL-RS Example	Risk Level
More sales, same products, same market	Sell more of what you already sell to existing customers	Increase hermetic bag sales to farmers already in your network	Low
New customers-same products, new markets	Find new customers in new locations with existing products	Open a second selling point in a neighbouring district	Medium
New products-existing customers	Add products your current customers would buy	Add moisture meters or silos to a hermetic bag enterprise	Medium
New products, new markets	Diversify into new products and new customer segments	Begin offering post-harvest storage services to cooperatives	High

The Growth Planning Canvas

The Growth Planning Canvas is a one-page tool that summarises where you want to go, what you need to get there, and how you will know if you are succeeding. Complete one canvas per growth direction.

RE-GAIN FL-RS ENTERPRISE – GROWTH PLANNING CANVAS	
MY GROWTH GOAL (12 Months): <i>By [Date], I Will [Specific, Measurable Outcome].</i>	GROWTH DIRECTION (Tick One): ☐ More Sales, Same Market ☐ New Customers, Same Products ☐ New Products, Existing Customers ☐ Diversification
What I Need (Resources / Finance / Skills):	What Could Stop Me (Risks):
Partners / Support I Will Need:	How I Will Measure Success: KPIs 1: _____ KPIs 2: _____

Risk Assessment and Mitigation

Risk is not something to be avoided; it is something to be understood and managed. FL-RS enterprises face a distinct set of risks that stem from the agricultural context, the technology market, and the financing landscape in which they operate.

Common Risks Facing FL-RS Enterprises

- **Risk:** Low seasonal demand. **Mitigation:** Diversify product range; maintain relationships with year-round buyers.
- **Risk:** Supplier delivery delays. **Mitigation:** Place orders well in advance; maintain a safety stock buffer.
- **Risk:** Customer credit defaults. **Mitigation:** Limit credit to known customers; require a deposit, a written agreement; review credit weekly.
- **Risk:** Stock damage/theft. **Mitigation:** Secure storage; basic insurance; regular physical counts.
- **Risk:** Exchange rate increases. **Mitigation:** Build a 10–15% price buffer into costing; understand floating price adjustment.
- **Risk:** New competition. **Mitigation:** Focus on relationships and service quality; emphasise RE-GAIN-linked product certification.

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Risk Register

Every FL-RS enterprise should maintain a simple risk register, a living document that names risks, assesses them, and tracks the actions taken to manage them.

RE-GAIN FL-RS Enterprise – Risk Register						
Risk Description	Likelihood (H/M/L)	Impact (H/M/L)	Risk Rating	Mitigation Action	Who is Responsible?	Review Date

 **TEMPLATE: RE-GAIN FL-RS RISK REGISTER**



EXERCISE 7.1: My Top Three Risks

1. Individually, identify the three risks that concern you most about your specific FL-RS enterprise.
2. For each risk, rate likelihood (High/Medium/Low) and impact (High/Medium/Low).
3. Identify one concrete action you will take to reduce each risk. Write in your risk register.
4. Share your top-rated risk with your table group. Discuss: Have others faced this risk? What worked?

MODULE 8: ACCESS TO FINANCE AND INVESTMENT READINESS

Activity Box	
Learning Objective	• Understand available financing options for FL-RS enterprises • Assess personal readiness to access each type of finance • Identify gaps and development actions • Prepare for lender engagement
Time required	90 minutes
Materials	Finance landscape overview, Financing Readiness Assessment tool, Investment Readiness Checklist, MFI/bank contacts list, case studies of successful financing

Facilitation Tip: Many enterprises don't access available finance not because it doesn't exist, but because they aren't yet ready. The problem is readiness, not availability. Help participants honestly assess their readiness to access each finance type and identify what gaps to address before approaching lenders. Remind them that RE-GAIN project provides linkage support under Component 2.

The Finance Landscape for FL-RS Enterprises

Access to finance is one of the most commonly cited constraints for FL-RS enterprise growth. However, the problem is not only that finance is unavailable, but often that enterprises are not yet ready for the finance that exists. This module maps the available finance options and helps participants honestly assess their readiness to access each type. Multiple finance sources exist; they include:

Finance Source	Type of Finance	Typical Amount	Key Requirements	Best Suited For
Village Savings & Loan Groups (VSLAs)	Internal group savings and loans	ZMW 500 – 10,000	Membership, regular savings contribution	Working capital, small stock top-up
Microfinance Institutions (MFIs)	Group or individual loans	ZMW 5,000 – 50,000	Business records, group guarantee or collateral	Stock finance, small equipment
Commercial Banks (SME Loans)	Term loans, overdraft facilities	ZMW 50,000+	3 years of records, collateral, and business plan	Type 2 equipment, expansion investment
Agricultural Development Bank (ZANACO Agri, FNB Agri), AgLeaseCo, etc	Agri-sector specific loans	Variable	Agri-business profile, land title or lease	Storage infrastructure, silos, grain sheds

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Finance Source	Type of Finance	Typical Amount	Key Requirements	Best Suited For
RE-GAIN Smart Subsidy (Blended Finance)	Subsidy reducing purchase price	Varies by product	Verified eligibility list from Impuls Africa	End-beneficiary farmers and SMEs
Equipment Leasing / Hire Purchase	Asset finance pays as you earn	Asset-specific	Deposit, regular income, informal credit history	Threshers, moisture meters, larger equipment
Producer Group Aggregated Finance	Pooled borrowing as a group	Variable	Group structure, governance, shared guarantee	Cooperatives, farmer groups buying Type 2



CASE STUDY: Aggregated Finance – Twikatane Cooperative, Central Province

Seven SME grain traders in Mumbwa district individually could not qualify for bank finance to purchase grain storage silos. Each had good sales records but lacked collateral.

Through Impuls Africa's linkage support under RE-GAIN Component 2, the group formed a registered cooperative structure and applied jointly for an MFI loan of ZMW 145,000, with shared liability. Impuls Africa provided a letter of support confirming their participation in the RE-GAIN supply chain.

The cooperative purchased eight one-tonne silos. Within one season, post-harvest losses across member enterprises dropped from an estimated 18% to under 3%. Revenue from extended grain storage selling later in the season at higher prices more than covered the loan repayment in the first year.

Lesson: Individual enterprises that cannot access finance alone can often do so collectively through aggregation.

Financing Readiness

Before approaching any finance provider, assess your readiness honestly. Key readiness indicators include, written records of sales and expenses; Can produce at least 3 months of sales records; Know monthly revenue and profit; Have registered business or TPIN number; Have dedicated business bank account; Have written business plan; Have clear finance purpose; Demonstrate ability to repay; Member of savings group or cooperative; Have collateral or guarantor; No existing loan arrears; Understand loan terms.

Scoring: 10–12 indicators = Ready for commercial or MFI finance. 7–9 indicators = Ready for VSLA or group-based finance. Below 7 = Focus first on building records and business structure. Before approaching any finance provider, assess your readiness honestly. This tool helps you identify which type of finance you can realistically access today, and what gaps to address for the future.

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FINANCING READINESS ASSESSMENT – RE-GAIN FL-RS Enterprise				
Readiness Indicator	Yes ✓	Partially ✓	Not Yet X	Action to Close the Gap
I keep written records of sales and expenses				
I can produce at least 3 months of sales records				
I know my monthly revenue and profit figures				
I have a registered business or TPIN number				
I have a business bank account (not personal)				
I have a written business plan or growth plan				
I have a clear purpose for the finance I am seeking				
I can demonstrate the ability to repay (cash flow positive)				
I am a member of a savings group or cooperative				
I have collateral or a guarantor (for bank loans)				
I have no existing loan arrears or defaults				
I understand the terms of the loan I am seeking				



FIGURE 8: FINANCING READINESS

Investment Readiness

Investment readiness is presenting your business in a way that gives finance providers confidence that your money will be well used and repaid. Five pillars of investment readiness are:

1. Clear Purpose (specific investment ask with clear use plan)
2. Financial Evidence (records showing revenue, costs, positive trends)
3. Management Credibility (knowledge of your numbers, risk awareness)
4. Repayment Capacity (business generates cash to repay)
5. Governance and Registration (legal status, tax compliance, formal structure).

Pillar	What Investors and Lenders Want to See	How to Build It
Clear Purpose	A specific investment asks with a clear plan for how funds will be used	Complete the Growth Planning Canvas (Module 4.1) and translate it into a simple pitch
Financial Evidence	Records showing revenue, costs, and positive cash flow trends	Maintain your four core records consistently (Module 3.1); prepare a simple 3-month summary
Management Credibility	Confidence that the business owner will use funds wisely	Demonstrate knowledge of your numbers; show your risk register; present your KPI tracker
Repayment Capacity	Evidence that the business generates enough cash to repay	Prepare a simple 12-month cash flow projection showing repayment built in
Governance and Registration	Legal status, tax compliance, formal structure	Register with PACRA; obtain TPIN; open a dedicated business account; maintain corporate governance documents

Investment Readiness Checklist

Business registered with PACRA and has TPIN; Dedicated business bank account separate from personal; At least 3 months written records available; Monthly revenue and profit clearly stated; Written growth or business plan exists; 12-month cash flow projection prepared; Risk register identifies top risks and mitigation; Loan purpose is specific; Repayment plan included in cash flow; Reference from Impuls Africa or RE-GAIN available. Investment readiness is about presenting your business in a way that gives a finance provider or investor confidence that their money will be well used and repaid. It is not about having a perfect business, it is about demonstrating professionalism, transparency, and clarity of purpose.

Investment Readiness Checklist	
✓	Item
☐	Business is registered with PACRA and has a valid TPIN
☐	A business bank account is separate from a personal account
☐	At least 3 months of written sales and expense records are available
☐	Monthly revenue and profit figures can be clearly stated
☐	A written growth plan or business plan exists (even one page)
☐	Cash flow projection for 12 months is prepared
☐	Risk register identifies top risks and mitigation actions
☐	Loan purpose is specific (e.g., purchase 50 silos for SME customers)
☐	The repayment plan is included in the cash flow projection
☐	Reference from Impuls Africa or RE-GAIN project is available

MODULE 9: SUPPLY CHAIN, PARTNERSHIPS, AND MARKET LINKAGES

Activity Box	
Learning Objective	• Strengthen your supply chain relationships • Map your position in the broader market system • Identify linkage opportunities • Build strategic partnerships • Understand aggregation benefits
Time required	90 minutes
Materials	Market systems map template, supply chain diagram, partnership assessment checklist, case studies of successful partnerships, enterprise cluster examples

Facilitation Tip: Enterprises that grow most sustainably become embedded in the broader market system. They are not just sellers, they understand and engage with supporting functions, rules, and norms. Help participants map their position and identify both opportunities and gaps. Aggregation models where multiple enterprises cooperate to act as a single, larger unit are particularly powerful.



FIGURE 9: SUPPLY CHAIN

Understanding Your Supply Chain Position

Every FL-RS enterprise sits within a supply chain running from manufacturers and importers through to end-use farmers. Your position in this chain and the strength of your relationships determine competitive advantage. Most FL-RS enterprises under RE-GAIN sit between the RE-GAIN Supplier and end-users. Your opportunity is to strengthen both the upstream relationship with the supplier and the downstream relationship with SMEs and farmer groups.

Practical Supply Chain Strengthening

- Challenge: Unpredictable product availability. Action: Place forward orders early; share projected demand with the supplier 30+ days ahead; use consolidated order forms.
- Challenge: High transport costs. Action: Aggregate orders with nearby enterprises; negotiate delivery terms for bulk orders.
- Challenge: Limited product range. Action: Identify two or three highest-demand products; negotiate preferential pricing for high-volume commitment.
- Challenge: Price uncertainty. Action: Understand MoU's floating exchange rate adjustment; maintain 10–15% price buffer in costing.

Supply Chain Challenge	Practical Action
Unpredictable product availability	Place forward orders early in the season. Share your projected demand with the supplier at least 30 days ahead. Use the consolidated order form provided by Impuls Africa.
High transport costs reducing margins	Aggregate orders with nearby enterprises to share transport. Negotiate delivery terms with the supplier for bulk orders.
Limited product range restricting sales	Identify the two or three products with the highest local demand. Negotiate preferential pricing or early allocation for high-volume commitment.
Price uncertainty due to the exchange rate	Understand and apply the MoU's floating exchange rate adjustment mechanism. Maintain a price buffer in your costings to absorb small variations.
Slow supplier response to queries	Establish direct contact with your supplier representative. Use Impuls Africa as a facilitator when issues persist.
Disruptions during peak season	Build a safety stock of fast-moving Type 1 products (hermetic bags, tarpaulins) before the peak season begins.

Market Systems and Linkages

A market systems map shows all actors, functions, and connections in your business environment. Mapping your position helps identify opportunities and gaps. Key actors include: RE-GAIN Suppliers (provide technologies at negotiated prices); Impuls Africa (demand facilitation, market linkage); Other Agro-Dealers (potential customers or competitors); Farmer Cooperatives (bulk buyers, community trust intermediaries); Financial Institutions (potential lenders); District Agricultural Officers

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(extension, farmer mobilization); Processors/Millers (B2B customers); Government Programmes (parallel programs reaching same farmers).

Market System Actor / Function	Role in FL-RS Market	Your Current Relationship	Opportunity to Strengthen
RE-GAIN Supplier	Provides FL-RS technologies at negotiated prices	Directly covered by the MoU	Forward ordering, joint demonstrations
Impuls Africa	Demand facilitation, beneficiary verification, market linkage	Project partner	Co-market through field days; share demand data
Agro-Dealers (other)	Distribution points where farmers buy inputs	Potential customers or competitors	Partner as sub-distributors in remote areas
Farmer Cooperatives	Bulk buyers, community trust intermediaries	Customer/referral network	Offer preferred pricing for bulk cooperative orders
Financial Institutions (MFIs/Banks)	Finance for SME technology investment	Potential lender	Build record-keeping to access finance; use RE-GAIN linkage
District Agricultural Officers (DACO)	Extension services, farmer mobilisation	Potential collaborator	Co-organise field days and demonstrations
Processors and Millers	Users of FL-RS equipment at scale	Potential B2B customer	Direct sales of threshers, moisture meters
Government Programmes (e.g., FISP)	Subsidised input distribution to farmers	Parallel programme	Coordinate to reach the same farmer groups at the same time



EXERCISE 9.1: Market Linkage Mapping

1. On the blank Market Linkage Map in your workbook, write YOUR ENTERPRISE in the centre circle.
2. In the surrounding boxes, write all the actors and organisations connected to your enterprise: suppliers, customers, finance providers, government offices, NGOs, cooperatives.
3. For each actor, draw a line to your enterprise. Use a solid line for strong relationships, a dashed line for weak or occasional connections, and no line for actors you are not yet connected to but should be.
4. Identify the two most important connections you need to build or strengthen in the next 12 months. Write these in your action plan.

Strategic Partnerships and Aggregation

No enterprise grows in isolation. Partnerships allow access to unreachable markets, shared costs, pooled resources, and stronger cases to finance providers. Aggregation models where multiple enterprises cooperate to act as a single, larger unit are particularly powerful. Example: Four FL-RS enterprises in neighbouring wards form an informal cluster, submitting a single consolidated monthly order, achieving the supplier minimum threshold, reducing transport costs, enabling one enterprise to build a demonstration site.

Before committing to a partnership, assess: Do I understand my contribution? Do I understand what I will receive? Is partner reputation compatible with my brand? Have we discussed what happens if it doesn't work? Are the values compatible? No conflicts of interest? Is it practically implementable? Is there a written record/MoU? Have I discussed with a trusted advisor? Is there a clear 6-month review date? Use the form below.

Partnership Type	Description	Example	Key Benefit
Supplier Partnership	Formalised preferred supplier arrangement with preferential pricing or reserved stock	FL-RS dealer commits to purchasing minimum quantities monthly in exchange for a 5% discount and priority stock allocation	Price advantage, supply security
Peer Enterprise Networks	Informal or formal networks of FL-RS enterprises sharing market information, experiences, and bulk orders	A group of Agro-dealers in Kapiri share transport costs and place combined orders to meet supplier minimums	Lower costs, peer learning
Aggregation with Cooperatives	FL-RS enterprise aggregates demand from multiple farmer groups and submits consolidated orders	Enterprise collects orders from 12 VSLAs, places a single order, delivers in bulk, and manages repayments	Volume discounts, efficiency
Service Provider Partnerships	Partnership with a complementary service provider (e.g., transporter, mechanic, storage facility)	FL-RS enterprise partners with local transporter for last-mile delivery at negotiated rates	Lower transport cost, reliability
Financial Institution Partnerships	Formal referral relationship with an MFI or bank to facilitate customer finance for Type 2 equipment	Bank offers hire-purchase for threshers through an FL-RS dealer; the dealer earns a facilitation fee	Expands the customer base to those who cannot pay cash
NGO/Project Partnerships	Collaboration with development projects for demonstrations, beneficiary identification, or joint training	RE-GAIN Project links FL-RS dealer to farmer groups and validates eligibility for smart subsidy	Market access, credibility

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Not all partnerships are beneficial. Before committing to a partnership arrangement, assess it against these criteria:

Partnership Assessment – Before You Commit	
✓	Item
☐	I understand clearly what I am contributing to the partnership
☐	I understand clearly what I will receive from the partnership
☐	The partner has a reputation I am comfortable being associated with
☐	We have discussed and agreed on what happens if the partnership is not working
☐	Our values and business approaches are compatible
☐	There is no conflict of interest between my enterprise and the partner's activities
☐	The partnership is practical; we can actually implement what we have agreed on
☐	There is a simple written record or MoU of what has been agreed
☐	I have reviewed the arrangement with a trusted advisor or fellow enterprise owner
☐	The arrangement has a clear review date, and we will assess it together after 6 months

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Before You Expand-Ask These Questions

Expansion decisions made without adequate preparation often led to cash shortfalls, overstretched operations, and damaged supplier or customer relationships. This checklist is designed to help FL-RS enterprise owners make a structured, evidence-based decision before committing to expansion.

FL-RS ENTERPRISE EXPANSION DECISION CHECKLIST		
Question	Your Response	Green / Amber / Red
Is my current business consistently profitable for at least 3 consecutive months?		
Do I have written records that clearly show my current performance?		
Do I have enough working capital to maintain current operations while expanding?		
Have I identified specific customers or demand in the new area or for the new product?		
Do I have a reliable supply chain that can handle increased volumes?		
Have I assessed the key risks of expansion and have plans to manage them?		
Do I have the time and management capacity to handle a larger operation?		
If I need finance for expansion, have I assessed my readiness and identified the source?		
Do I have the right partnerships and market linkages in place to support expansion?		
Have I discussed my expansion plan with a trusted advisor, mentor, or business partner?		

Interpretation: 8–10 Green = Proceed with confidence. 5–7 Green = Proceed with caution- address amber items first. Below 5 Green = Delay expansion and strengthen current operations.

MODULE 10: 90-DAY ACTION PLANNING

Activity Box	
Learning Objective	• Translate learning into concrete, time-bound action • Create personal business action plan • Commit to priority actions • Establish review schedule and support needs
Time required	120 minutes
Materials	Action plan template, flipcharts for peer review, commitment cards, action plan summary sheet, contact information for RE-GAIN support.

Facilitation Tip: Everything covered in this manual leads to this point: a personal, written, time-bound action plan you will implement in the 90 days following training. The plan belongs to participants. Impuls Africa will follow up on progress through regular check-ins and field visits. Give participants 40 minutes to complete their plan. Have them pair up for peer review: each reads their plan to their partner who asks: "Is this specific? Is it realistic? What might stop you?" Conclude with commitment ceremony: each participant reads their single most important action aloud to group. Facilitator records these for 30-day follow-up reference.



FIGURE 10: 90-DAY ACTION PLAN

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Turning Learning into Action

Everything covered in Stage 3 and Stage 4 of this manual leads to this point: a personal, written, time-bound action plan that you will implement in the 90 days following this training. The plan belongs to you. Impuls Africa will follow up on your progress through regular check-ins and field visits.

MY 90-DAY BUSINESS ACTION PLAN | RE-GAIN PROJECT

Enterprise Name: _____

Plan Start Date: _____

Plan End Date: _____

My 12-Month Business Goal (from Growth Planning Canvas):

By [Month/Year], I will _____

90-DAY ACTION STEPS

#	Action / Activity	Stage of Manual (3 or 4)	Target Completion	Resources Needed	Who Can Help Me?	How I Know It Is Done

My single most important commitment for the next 30 days:

I will by _____

Support I will request from Impuls Africa:

Signed (Enterprise Owner): _____

Date: _____

Witnessed (Impuls Africa): _____

Date: _____

Business Model Canvas

Business Model Canvas		Designed for: Startup Name	Designed by: Name1, Name2, ...	Date: DD/MM/YYYY	Version: X.Y
Key Partners  Who are our Key Partners? Who are our key suppliers? Which Key Resources are we acquiring from partners? Which Key Activities do partners perform? MOTIVATIONS FOR PARTNERSHIPS: Optimization and economy, Reduction of risk and uncertainty, Acquisition of particular resources and activities	Key Activities  What Key Activities do our Value Propositions require? Our Distribution Channels? Customer Relationships? Revenue streams? CATEGORIES: Production, Problem Solving, Platform/Network	Value Propositions  What value do we deliver to the customer? Which one of our customer's problems are we helping to solve? What bundles of products and services are we offering to each Customer Segment? Which customer needs are we satisfying? CHARACTERISTICS: Newness, Performance, Customization, "Getting the Job Done", Design, Brand/Status, Price, Cost Reduction, Risk Reduction, Accessibility, Convenience/Usability	Customer Relationships  What type of relationship does each of our Customer Segments expect us to establish and maintain with them? Which ones have we established? How are they integrated with the rest of our business model? How costly are they?	Customer Segments  For whom are we creating value? Who are our most important customers? Is our customer base a Mass Market, Niche Market, Segmented, Diversified, Multi-sided Platform	
Key Resources  What Key Resources do our Value Propositions require? Our Distribution Channels? Customer Relationships Revenue Streams? TYPES OF RESOURCES: Physical, Intellectual (brand patents, copyrights, data), Human, Financial		Channels  Through which Channels do our Customer Segments want to be reached? How are we reaching them now? How are our Channels integrated? Which ones work best? Which ones are most cost-efficient? How are we integrating them with customer routines?			
Cost Structure  What are the most important costs inherent in our business model? Which Key Resources are most expensive? Which Key Activities are most expensive? IS YOUR BUSINESS MORE: Cost Driven (leanest cost structure, low price value proposition, maximum automation, extensive outsourcing), Value Driven (focused on value creation, premium value proposition). SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS: Fixed Costs (salaries, rents, utilities), Variable costs, Economies of scale, Economies of scope			Revenue Streams  For what value are our customers really willing to pay? For what do they currently pay? How are they currently paying? How would they prefer to pay? How much does each Revenue Stream contribute to overall revenues? TYPES: Asset sale, Usage fee, Subscription Fees, Lending/Renting/Leasing, Licensing, Brokerage fees, Advertising FIXED PRICING: List Price, Product feature dependent, Customer segment dependent, Volume dependent DYNAMIC PRICING: Negotiation (bargaining), Yield Management, Real-time-Market		

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COMMITMENT AND FOLLOW-UP

Each participant will read their single most important 30-day action aloud to the group. Facilitator records these. These are referenced at the 30-day check-in with your RE-GAIN contact.

Impuls Africa will support you through implementation. You will receive regular check-ins, feedback on progress, and additional support if you encounter challenges. Your success is our success.

Congratulations

You have completed this comprehensive training manual covering all four stages of FL-RS enterprise development:

Stage 1: Generate Your Business Idea – Entrepreneurship foundations and business opportunity screening

Stage 2: Start Your Business – Market understanding, costing, pricing, and break-even analysis

Stage 3: Improve Your Business – Record-keeping, financial management, performance monitoring, and marketing

Stage 4: Expand Your Business – Growth planning, risk management, finance access, partnerships, and action planning

You now have the knowledge, tools, and a personal action plan to run a stronger, more profitable, and more connected FL-RS enterprise.

This manual belongs to you. Return to it frequently as you implement your action plan. Sections you need will become clear as you face real business decisions.

The business is yours. The decisions are yours to make. Impuls Africa and the RE-GAIN Project team will support you through implementation, but your commitment, learning, and action will determine your success.

