

# Farmer Business School (FBS)

**KULIMA More Income and Employment in Rural Areas of Malawi (KULIMA MIERA)**  
**Green Innovation Centre for the Agriculture and Food Sector (GIAE)**

## Background

The Farmer Business School (FBS) concept was developed for smallholder farmers producing Cocoa in Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast and Cameroon by the *GIZ Sustainable Cocoa Business Project* in 2010. Since then, over 1,300,000 smallholder farmers in 19 African countries have been trained in the FBS approach. Evaluations confirm significant positive impacts on farm and household management, the adoption of good agricultural practices and access to financial services, professional organisation, and incomes.

## The FBS Approach

FBS is a comprehensive adult learning approach that targets changing the mind-set of smallholder farmers by sensitising them for market opportunities and possibilities to improve productivity, family income, and nutrition. The core of its modules is income oriented decision-making based on cost-benefit analysis of different technologies for a lead crop and two other food crops, combined with strategy development to diversify income.

## FBS in Malawi

FBS was first introduced to Malawi in 2012 through the Competitive African Cotton Initiative (COMPACI), in collaboration with the Great Lakes Cotton Company (GLCC). Through this partnership, 12,749 cotton smallholder farmers were trained in FBS.

In 2017, GIZ introduced FBS to the Tea, Soya, Groundnut, and Maize value chains in collaboration with private sector partners (Exagris Africa Ltd., Strategic Alliance for Tea (STA), the Agricultural Commodity Exchange for Africa (ACE)) and a private sector / civil society partner, the National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM). In order to address marketing problems and other related challenges with smallholder farming, new modules on 'Contract Farming', 'Marketing of Farm Produce', and

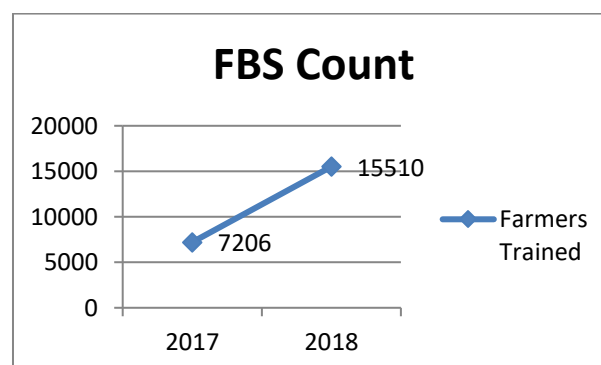
'Benefits from Membership in Farmer Organisations' were developed.

## FBS Progress (2017 and 2018)

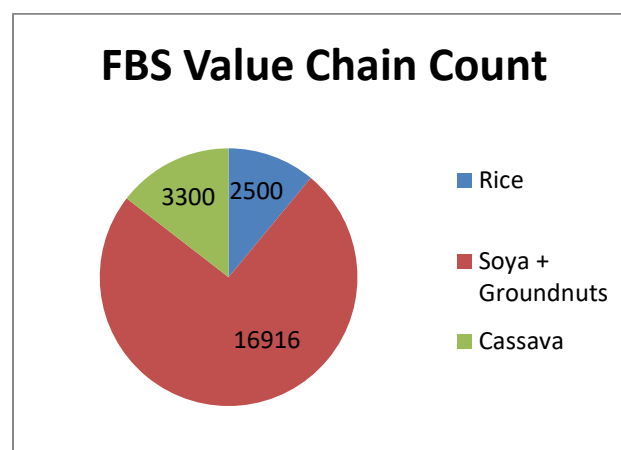
Upon a successful pilot in 2017 in which 7,206 smallholder farmers were trained in the value chains of soya, groundnuts and cassava, FBS was upscaled in 2018 to reach 15,510 smallholder farmers in the old and newly adopted value chains.

In 2018, the adaptation was done in the rice value chain.

**Figure 1: FBS Count 2017 and 2018**



**Figure 2: Overall FBS value chain distribution for 2017 and 2018**



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## Results of FBS

Farmers that have participated in FBS have shown positive changes towards:

- Understanding of the farm business concept and opportunity costing
- Gross margin calculations
- Active participation in Farmer Organisations (buying shares)
- Financial management (Keeping records, Money In-Money Out)
- Adoption of new technologies, for example improved seeds

## Progress on FBS 2019

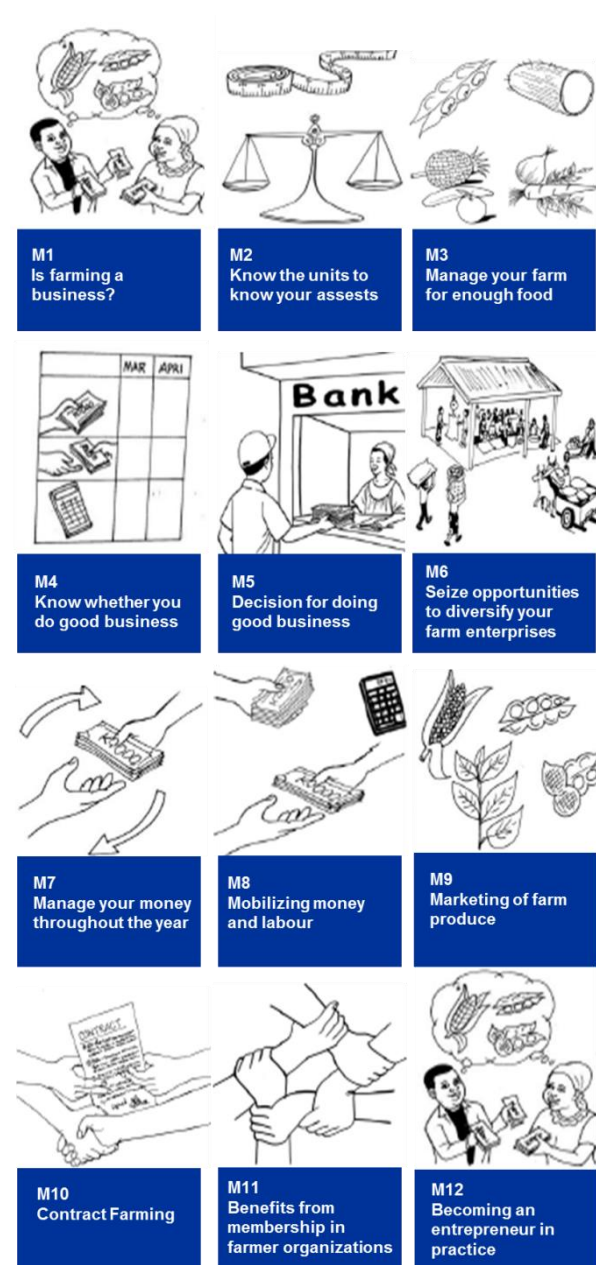
Following the successful pilot season 2017 and an upscaling in 2018, FBS has further been adapted to the macadamia value chain and a pilot is underway.

Full scale FBS is being run in the value chains of soya, groundnuts, cassava and rice. It is estimated that 20,000 smallholder farmers will be trained in the specified value chains.

Post training support of FBS farmers was first conducted in 2019 and will be developed further by KULIMA MIERA and GIAE.

Between 2017 and 2019, seven FBS modules have been developed in Malawi for the different value chains. Figure 3 provides an overview of the FBS modules for the soya and groundnuts value chain. The modules M9, M11 and M12 were developed locally.

Figure 3: The FBS Modules (Soya and Groundnuts)



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