



## MODULE

# SUSTAINABILITY BUSINESS MODELS FOR AGRIPRENEURS

## Unit 5 | Activity 1 My sustainable business plan



20min



- Pen and blank paper
- ACORN's sustainable business plan template
- To have completed Unit 1, Activity 2
- To have completed Unit 2, Activity 2
- To have completed Unit 3, Activity 2
- To have completed Unit 4, Activity 2

## DESCRIPTION

This activity will help you translate your sustainable business model canvas, which you have filled in on *Activity 4 My sustainable business model canvas*, into a more detailed sustainable business plan, by using the template provided. In the end, it will allow you to have a finalised sustainable business plan explaining what your sustainable business idea is and how you could implement it to create economic, societal, and environmental value.

# THE ACTIVITY

On the next page you will find ACORN's sustainable business plan template. Make sure you review **the theory of Developing the sustainable business plan** to keep in mind what is needed in each section and have your ACORN's sustainable business model canvas and SMART sustainable goals planning form before starting to write. Download the template and make sure you follow the instructions. Remember to not go beyond the 50 pages. Best of luck with your sustainable agricultural business!

# THE THEORY

Even though the business plan is a more detailed document than a business model canvas, it does not need to be comprehensive or heavy. The most important about a sustainable business plan is that it is clear, assertive, and flexible enough, allowing for future changes as the small farmer's business evolves or reshapes to accommodate strategic business changes, influenced by internal (e.g., adoption of eco-practices) or external factors (e.g., increase of market prices of agricultural products).

## **So, how should small farmers structure a sustainable business plan?**

Although a sustainable business plan is not to follow a fixed structure, it is suggested that small farmers take into consideration the following sections:

# How should small farmers structure a Sustainable Business Plan?

## 01 Executive summary

You should get into the mind of future readers of your sustainable business plan, e.g., potential investors, and business partners. Since they usually have limited time, this section will act as a business card for your sustainable business. It should be short and concise, a maximum of two pages, summing up your sustainable business, i.e., product/service/process name, market potential, negative and positive externalities, your profile, the main sustainability goals you wish to achieve, and information about your differentiation strategy to achieve them. This summary should catch the reader's interest.

## 02 Presentation of the sustainable business idea

This implies a well-organised description of the sustainable agricultural business you intend to reshape or create. You should indicate the main advantages, which make it different from other market players on what concerns innovation but also sustainability aspects and what is the business's market and sustainability potential.

## 03 Presentation of the small farmer, the agricultural business and its structure and organisation

This is your time to shine! Present yourself and be confident of your skills and your business' relevance. It is very important to refer to your education and training experience, and involvement in past projects or businesses, as well as describe the employees involved in the business. Additionally, you should provide information on your business mission, vision, and values, particularly those based on the sustainable goals you are willing to achieve, as they will define your agricultural business from then on. A simple organigram will do the trick when presenting the business organisation.

## 04 Internal and external framework

The main goal of this section is to let the reader know your local, national, European, or international context, which influences your strategic sustainable business decisions

## 05 Market analysis and agricultural business positioning

When you want to launch a new agricultural business or reshape your current one towards the adoption of more sustainable practices, market awareness is very important. Therefore, it is crucial to know the development status of your product/service's market, what are the major players/competitors, the type of customers, what they aim to acquire, and if they are willing to reshape their consumer habits or pay higher prices based on the strategic sustainable business decisions you will implement

## 06 Definition of goals and commercial strategy

For a sustainable business plan to succeed, you should clearly identify the main goals of your agricultural business. You should also focus your analysis on the needs of customers and product/service positioning on the market, i.e., your sustainable agribusiness commercial strategy. This includes the presentation of your business marketing strategy, in which you will identify your main customers and their segmentation, the means used to increase sales, the creation of your corporate image, and how you communicate it – based on the sustainability and circular economy concept –, among other topics. This is also the perfect location to include your SMART brainstorming exercise (see Unit 4: Sustainable business model plan)

## 07 Financial forecast and investment needed

Here small farmers should include financial projections that translate their business change or creation towards more sustainable goals and practices, to determine the financial impact of adopting environmental-friendly initiatives at the business level. These are the business cash flows that determine the return on investment on sustainability. Additionally, you should consider sale projections, costs with personnel, costs with used raw materials, external suppliers, etc. On the other hand, the investment needed for the sustainable business implementation should also be very explicit on the sustainability business plan, followed by how you intend to comply with them (e.g., bank credit, crowdfunding, subsidies)

## 08 Conclusions

This section will close your sustainable business plan and, thus, should be clear, and concise and include the information you find most relevant to highlight from everything you have presented. This usually relates to what is your added value and that of your employees for moving forward with a more sustainable agribusiness and how your business idea, i.e., products/service differentiates from others already in the market, i.e., what is its innovation potential for higher social and/or environmental impact. Here you can also include a summary table with bullet points for a more visual presentation of the information, particularly on what relates to your business profitability versus its positive externalities

## 09 Other relevant information

Might be considered and included as Annexes. This can be technical specifications of your business product/service changes, your curriculum and those of your employees, brand and logo and user specifications, financial documents, agreements with relevant partners, etc.

A well delivered sustainable business plan should follow the structure presented and its content should be based on a previously filled sustainable business model canvas. For small farmers, you should now have next to you your ACORN sustainable business model canvas that you have filled in **activity 3.2: My sustainable business model canvas**.

On the next pages you will find a detailed description of what your business plan should look like.



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# THE BUSINESS PLAN TEMPLATE



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Subtitle

You should get into the mind of future readers of your sustainable business plan, e.g., potential investors, business partners. Since they usually have limited time, this section will act as a business card to your sustainable business. It should be short and concise, a maximum of two pages, summing up your sustainable business, i.e., product/service/process name, market potential, negative and positive externalities, your profile, the main sustainability goals you wish to achieve and information about your differentiation strategy to achieve them. This summary should catch the reader's interest.

Replace this text with your own.





# [NAME OF YOUR BUSINESS IDEA]

## Subtitle

This implies a well organised description of the sustainable agricultural business you intend to reshape or create. You should indicate the main advantages, what makes it different from other market players on what concerns innovation but also sustainability aspects and what is the business's market and sustainability potential.

Replace this text with your own.



# [NAME OF COMPANY] STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION

## Subtitle

This is your time to shine! Present yourself and be confident of your skills and your business' relevance. It is very important to refer to your education and training experience, involvement in past projects or businesses, as well as describe the employees involved in the business. Additionally, you should provide information on your business mission, vision, and values, particularly those based on the sustainable goals you are willing to achieve, as they will define your agricultural business from then on. A simple organigram will do the trick when presenting the business organisation.

Replace this text with your own.



## INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CONTEXT

### Subtitle

The main goal of this section is to let the reader know your local, national, European, or international context, that influences your strategic sustainable business decisions.

Replace this text with your own.



# MARKET ANALYSIS AND PRODUCT DIFFERENTIATION

## Subtitle

When you want to launch a new agricultural business or reshape your current one towards the adoption of more sustainable practices, market awareness is very important. Therefore, it is crucial to know the development status of your product/service's market, what are the major players/competitors, the type of customers, what they aim to acquire and if they are willing to reshape their consumer habits or pay higher prices based on the strategic sustainable business decisions you will implement.

Replace this text with your own.



# SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS GOALS AND MARKET STRATEGY

## Subtitle

For a sustainability business plan to succeed, you should clearly identify the main goals of your agricultural business. You should also focus your analysis on the needs of customers and product/service positioning on the market, i.e., your sustainable agribusiness commercial strategy. This includes the presentation of your business marketing strategy, in which you will identify your main customers and their segmentation, the means used to increase sales, the creation of your corporate image and how you which to communicate it – based on the sustainability and circular economy concept –, among other topics. This is also the perfect location to include your SMART brainstorming exercise.

**Specific – WHO? WHAT? IN WHAT WAYS?**



**Measurable – HOW?**



**Attainable – REASONABLE?**



**Relevant – EXPECTED RESULT?**



**Time oriented – WHEN?**



Replace this text with your own.



## FINANCIAL FORECAST AND INVESTMENT NEEDS

### Subtitle

Here small farmers should include financial projections that translate their business change or creation towards more sustainable goals and practices, to determine the financial impact of adopting environmental-friendly initiatives at the business level. These are the business cash flows that determine the return on investment on sustainability. Additionally, you should consider sale projections, costs with personnel, costs with used raw materials, external suppliers, etc. On the other hand, the investment needed for the sustainable business implementation should also be very explicit on the sustainability business plan, followed by how you intend to comply with them (e.g., bank credit, crowdfunding, subsidies).

Replace this text with your own.



## CONCLUSIONS

### Subtitle

This section will close your sustainable business plan and, thus, should be clear, and concise and include the information you find most relevant to highlight from everything you have presented. This usually relates to what is your added-value and that of your employees for moving forward with a more sustainable agribusiness and how your business idea, i.e., products/service differentiates from others already in the market, i.e., what is its innovation potential for higher social and/or environmental impact. Here you can also include a summary table with bullet points for a more visual presentation of the information, particularly on what relates to your business profitability versus its positive externalities.

Replace this text with your own.



## ANNEXES

### Annex n°1

Other relevant information might be considered and included as Annexes. This can be technical specifications of your business product/service changes, your curriculum and those of your employees, brand and logo and user specifications, financial documents, agreements with relevant partners, etc.

Replace this text with your own.



## Developed by our organizations



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