SCALING SWEETPOTATO TRIPLE S PLUS: what are we learning
Ethiopia and Ghana

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CHALLENGES

• **Women and resource poor** households lack timely access to quality sweetpotato planting material

• Acute in areas with **extended dry season** & unpredictable rainfall patterns

• **Decreasing land holding size**: imperative to intensify and increase productivity

• **Limited shelf-life** of storage roots: limited consumption period; inability to take advantage of peak market prices

• Unavailability of and **limited access to nutritious foods** in the dry season

Drying sweetpotato plants in mid January at Mirababaya, SNNPR, Ethiopia. Photo credit: M. Cherinet
TRIPLE S - BENEFITS

• Farmer managed seed practice:
  • low cost, inputs locally available

• Adaptable to different contexts (e.g. length of dry season) & varieties:
  • options for gender based preferences
  • reduces labour & water requirement for multiplication
  • reduces exposure to pests & diseases

• Root production from Triple S planting material:
  • 91% gross margin for every US$1 invested compared to 77% KSH using the conventional approach.

Kulfo variety has pink sprouts (top); Sweetpotato vines after 45 days in root bed, SNNPR, Ethiopia. Photo credit: M. Cherinet
Innovation package

- **Technological innovation** (hand held computer with mobile operating system, integrated network for voice, messaging & data)
- **Infrastructural innovation** (cellular network)
- **Market innovation** (promotions, incentives to keep up with the latest model)
- **Policy innovation** (telecommunication providers, mobile money transfer)
- **Value chain innovation** (availability of sim cards & air time)
- **Service provision innovation** (providing solar charging sales points for smart phone users without access to power grid)
- **Mindset innovation** (youth are leading use of technology as it is ‘cool’)
- **Educational innovation** (spin-offs for app developers; social enterprises use for health & market benefits)

Credit: Adapted from Schut, M. (RTB 5.4)
**Triple S innovation package**

- **Technological** innovation – storage in sand and sprouting roots
- **Market** innovation… customer demand for OFSP
- **Policy** innovation… climate smart agriculture and nutrition sensitive agriculture
- **Value chain innovation** …. Sweetpotato processing & product diversification
- **Service provision innovation**…. BoANRD, MoFA, NGO extension services
- **Mindset innovation** … quality diets, healthy living
- **Educational innovation**…. Training at scale, using different entry points, communication channels
- **Infrastructural** innovation - video & radio

Credit: Adapted from Schut, M. (RTB 5.4)
The “PLUS” TECHNOLOGIES

• Agronomic practices:
  • improve quality of roots for sprouting & storage; and productivity and sorting/selection of roots

• Gender responsive choices:
  • principle of sand storage used for sprouting &/or extending shelf life of storage roots
  • stepped pits & sand boxes

Training materials for GAPs (top); Preparation of Stepped Pit (l) and Sand Box (r), Navrongo, Ghana. Photo credit: P. Abidin
FROM KNOWLEDGE TO UPTAKE

Gender responsive communication materials & approach

80,000 small-holder farmers (50% women)

- use Triple S PLUS
- 30% higher sweetpotato root yields
- enhanced home consumption, extended storage and sale by 2022

- Trainers’ manual, flip charts and farmer handouts
- Video based extension & radio programmes

Materials credit: Stathers, Namanda et al., NRI, 2017

Participatory video production (r) and used for discussion with women (l). Senegal. Photo credit: T. v. Mourik
Scaling Readiness

FOR WHO?

Credit: Schut, M. (RTB 5.4); Adapted by M.McEwan
• Varieties
  • Meeting end user preferences?
  • Validate varieties under Triple S
  • OFSP varieties will stay in the system

• Storage for production of planting material – and.... for fresh root consumption & sale
  • Ghana – Double S
  • Male and female different preferences

• Triple S: seasonal cycle vs calendar/project cycle
  • Purchase of roots (if preferred varieties available) to kick start; rather than wait for full cycle

• Agronomic/GAPs important
  • Partner technical knowledge limited
    • Outsourcing
  • Gender relations may inhibit adoption
    • Both women AND men should be trained

• Emerging research areas – role of complementary projects
• **Knowledge of diversified uses for OFSP** – drives demand for vines....and Triple S:
  • Linking Triple S into value chain approaches

• **Large agriculture-nutrition** NGO programmes – disseminating OFSP vines:
  • Triple S is an exit strategy, complementary to decentralised multipliers;

• How do we ensure that promotion of Triple S is **gender responsive**:
  • NGOs working on female empowerment
  • Identification of Champion Households: husband, wife, youth: different roles and benefits
  • Sensitize men and include some in training
  • Healthy Living Clubs: under five care-givers
  • Women’s Development Army
  • Multi-media communication channels

Farmer leader of Triple S FRG, SNNPR, Ethiopia. Photo credit: M.Cherinet
WHAT ARE WE LEARNING – CAPACITIES at SCALE

- **Training of Trainers** & step-down: how to ensure the quality of training once CIP is not involved:
  - Pre & post training assessment
  - Participant & trainer reflection on easy/difficult topics & follow up

- **Multiple languages**, multiple channels
  - Use of visuals (cartoons), video, radio, “talking books”, pre-recorded messages;
  - Checking on interpretation of cartoons;
  - Simplification & standardisation vs local adaptation

- **Assessing different intensities** of out-reach to secure knowledge & use of Triple S:
  - Core households: face to face training & radio (Ethiopia)
  - Spill-over households: video-based extension
  - Reached households: only radio programmes & seasonal spot messages

Ms Ayelech explaining the benefits of Triple S for early food. Ethiopia inception meeting
Credit. F. Asfaw
• **Scaling partners**: public and NGO extension
  - Where do sweetpotato & Triple S fit into their priorities
  - Project time-scale and funding cycles: piggy-backing may be a challenge
  - Existing projects provided launch pad for scaling

• **Shifting from project mode** (CIP implementation) to scaling mode – partner implementation
  - Small grant – it’s not the $$ that counts – but intention to scale within partners’ capacities & resources;
  - More flexibility in establishing agreements/MOUs
  - Monitoring & tracking uptake: using partner systems; limit the questions

• **Additional partners** needed – health sector

• **Staff turnover** in partner organisations:
  - Continuous awareness raising

• **SPHI (FARA & CIP)**: community of practice, advocacy and further investment
  - TOGETHER reaching 10 million households with sweetpotato varieties by 2020
SCALING READINESS TOOLS – WHAT ARE WE LEARNING

• Were we as ready as we thought?
  • The scaling readiness tool helped to:
    • unpack the core components
    • identify those which had not moved beyond project level;
    • Identify what may be missing – complementary components

• Partnering and partner engagement
  • Understanding partner motivation & finding common ground
  • Role & importance of different partners will change through scaling process
  • Adapting our dissemination approach to the structure and approach that scaling partners were already using
  • Triple-S in agricultural colleges and training curricula
  • Sharing information - sensitivities

• Monitoring context:
  • Seasonal conditions
  • Political conditions

Working through partners’ own dissemination approaches, Ghana. Credit. I. Suleman
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