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

SAM NAMANDA, MARGARET MCEWAN MIHIRETU CHERINET, ISSAHAQ SULEMAN, TOM VAN MOURIK, FREZER ASFAW, ROSEMARY KIHIU, CIP-SSA (RTB). 9TH ANUAL SPHI TECHNICAL MEETING. 24-26 SEPTEMBER, 2018

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

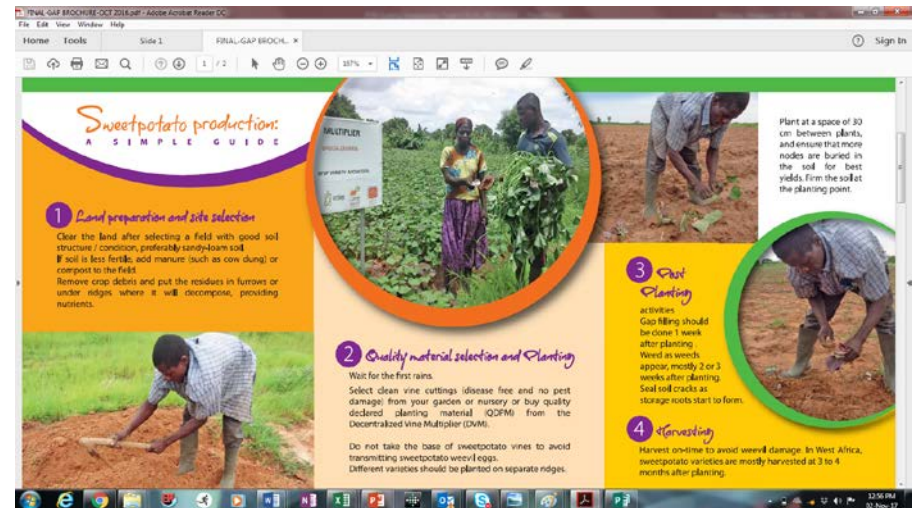Credit: Adapted from Schut, M. (RTB 5.4)

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

STORING IN SAND AND SPROUTING SWEETPOTATO TRIPLE S TRAINING CHARTS
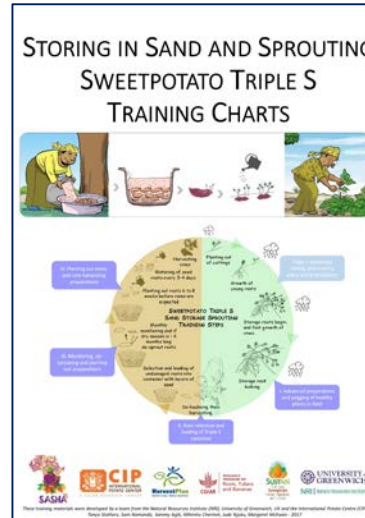
Materials credit: Stathers, Namanda et al., NRI, 2017
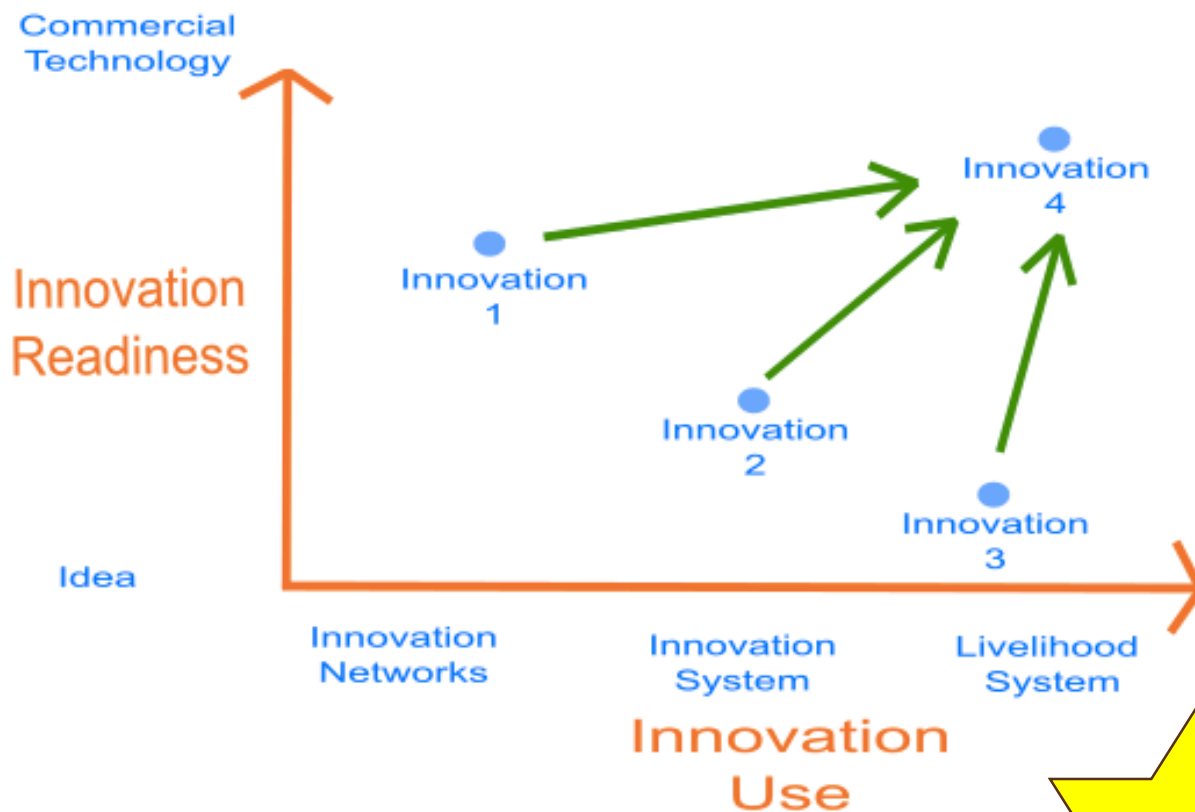

Sand, Storage, Sprouting Sweetpotato Triple S system

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

Scaling Readiness

WHAT ARE WE LEARNING - TECHNICAL

- **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

Training on identification of healthy plants and pegging. Credit: I.Suleman

- **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

- **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

WHAT ARE WE LEARNING - PARTNERING

- **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

Monitoring a MEDA-GROW DVM's seed production garden in Upper West Region. Credit. T. van Mourik

- **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

Acknowledgements
CIP, RTB, USAID, Irish Aid, SASHA, EU, MEDA, RING, MoFA, BoANRD, PIN

Thank you