Gender and the Legume Alliance

Integrating multi-media communication approaches and input brokerage

Campaign plans in Tanzania and Ghana

The GALA project is exploring how effective different media, and combinations of media are in increasing awareness and adoption of legume technologies. There is a specific emphasis on how different promotional approaches impact women and younger farmers.

For its campaigns the GALA project builds on the work that CABI has been doing with the Africa Soil Health Consortium (ASHC) since 2011, which translated into the development and production of exemplar information material in various formats, including flyers and manuals. In addition, ASHC has broadened to include ‘sister’ projects that concur to provide elements to the campaigns especially in Tanzania.

This newsletter provides an update on the status of the campaigns in Ghana and Tanzania.

A campaign plan for soybean in Ghana

In November 2016, the GALA inception meeting was convened in Tamale, Ghana, to kick off the project and explore challenges and opportunities for a soybean campaign in Northern Ghana. Delegates came from a wide range of organisations including the University of Development Studies; the Ministry of Food and Agriculture; private sector input suppliers; national and international organisations with on-going legume projects and communication and gender experts.

The campaign plan that emerged from that meeting presented a strong emphasis on sustainable supply chains that give farmers access to inputs and market development to help them sell surplus crops. So, information and inputs are being developed simultaneously. We are working with a number of partner organisations.

Developing a campaign for a country requires us to have good knowledge of the communications options. It is also essential to know what inputs farmer can obtain. This has led us to a focus on inoculant use – but to do so in the context of the range of inputs and how they work together.

In Ghana, the GALA-ASHC team has identified a series of dissemination channels, including print, film, and village meetings. Printed materials will be developed in English, however the film elements will be delivered in several of Ghanian languages.

We will be working with the award-winning Countrywise Communications Ghana to produce the promotional films for the campaign. We are planning village-based

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screening to attract family audiences. Using a motorbike and trailer, Countrywise can get film screenings set up in rural villages in even the most inaccessible areas of Ghana.

GALA is also looking at technologies that will allow films to be passed between smartphone owners so that small-scale farming households can watch the films as often as they wish.

At the core of the communications experiment in Ghana will be 75 screenings of a series of short films on soybean inputs, agronomy and post-harvest value-additions.

In addition, we will be holding 21 village meetings without film screenings. We will be piloting several different print formats for distribution to farmers to see which proves most effective. For example, one version could be a traditional leaflet, whilst another could be a poster. An extension manual and agro-dealer poster will ensure that the professional input available to farmers will be consistent with the core messages of the GALA campaign. The GALA team will commission all these materials in the coming weeks.

The campaign will culminate in a series of events designed to open up access to the inputs recommended by GALA.

The next key task is to look at what soybean promotional activities, promoted by sister projects, will be happening in Northern Ghana. These are likely to include radio promotion, demonstration plots, training and the distribution of printed material. Wherever possible the GALA team will seek to support and augment these projects, sharing resources, information and data.

The soybean campaign will run initially for one season, but if additional resources can be accessed, the project can pick-up in subsequent seasons. The campaign is due to start on 1 March 2017 and will take place in the Northern Region.
Common bean and soybean campaigns in Tanzania

The Legume Alliance in Tanzania emerged in early 2015. Under the ASHC program, CABI was keen to experiment with a campaign-based approach to the dissemination of information and ran a small campaign on common bean. A second strand of the campaign was to gather information on farmers’ attitudes to farm inputs with the ultimate aim being to even-out supply and demand for improved legume technology inputs – including seed, fertilizer and, in the case of soybean, inoculant.

This work is on-going and is being delivered by I-logix, a Nairobi-based research business, based on telephone interviews. The pilot project on common bean, was a steep learning curve for the partners, but it built trust amongst them and showed what could be achieved.

As new funding opportunities arose, instead of competing for resources, the Legume Alliance members worked together to bring in new project funds. The International Centre for Development Research (IDRC) provided funds for a project called Scaling-up Improved Legume Technology (SILT) that delivers geographically-specific campaigns, targeting small-scale farming families, delivered just ahead of the legume planting seasons. SILT is jointly led by Farm Radio International, African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership and CABI in partnership with IITA/N2Africa and the Agricultural Science Association (ASA).

IFAD provided funds for the project Upscaling Technologies in Agriculture through Knowledge Extension (UPTAKE), where mobile phone and radio technologies are used to provide information to small-scale farmers on proven agricultural technologies in which beans are one of the target crops.

The GALA project funded by UKAid, will tap into these activities by integrating learning on gender and value chain aspects to the legume campaigns in much more detail than it would have been possible with the initial project funding.
The Tanzania partnership – so far…

32 partners working together to support improved information flows or enhanced access to inputs

9 knowledge partners with proven technologies, or practices, to share

9 research partners that work with the team to learn lessons and assess outcomes

11 input partners (usually private sector) establishing sustainable supply chains for inputs

14 delivery partners using different media and/or interpersonal approaches to reach farmers

4 crops: cassava, maize, common bean & soybean

Common bean poster hits the spot?

This common bean poster was designed in a write-shop, in Tanzania, by a group of young agro-dealers supported by researchers. It was designed to be located in their shops alongside the inputs – seed, fertilizer, crop protection and storage materials. The brief, based on the feedback from farmers, was to create something concise and yet comprehensive. This poster sets out the instructions for the key stages from land preparation and planning to storage.

A man and woman are portrayed working on different aspects of the crop-cycle, but towards a common goal. Storekeepers can customize the poster to list the inputs that are actually available. This was part of the Legume Alliance common bean campaign.

To see all the materials used in the campaign visit: http://africasoilhealth.cabi.org/materials

The advent of the GALA project means that the partners can look in detail at the gender impact of the materials utilized in the campaign approach.

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