



**The socially engaged investors guide to communication for development:** How public and private investment in communication for development can influence scale-up and adoption in small-scale farming households in sub-Saharan Africa

## Acknowledgements

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The guide was developed at a write-shop at which the outline structure for each section was agreed. The CABI team then worked on the notes, carried out further research and consultation and arrived at the current draft.

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# Section 1: Overview



This guide examines how investment in communication for development can contribute to attitude and behavior change within the small-scale farming sector in sub-Saharan Africa. It seeks to encourage investors to better plan and adequately budget for communication within a development context, whether private sector or public sector investment. Communication for development is a participatory and structured process of designing the best strategy and series of actions by which a communication process will achieve the intended objectives. It involves establishing a dialogue and mobilizing the intended stakeholders to determine appropriate communication outputs according to their characteristics, needs, capacities and resources.

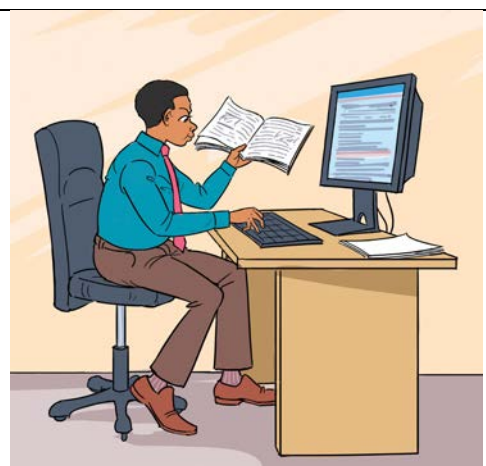
The strongest campaigns and campaign materials come as a result of a communication for development approach – i.e. active engagement with members of the target audience from the outset. The additional investment in upfront communication for development costs delivers appropriate and timely targeted materials and messages that are rooted in the lived experience of the audience and so resonate with them much more.

Technologies recommended to farmers need to be proven, realistic and replicable, for example in terms of access to the inputs required. The risks and returns on proposed investments need to be clearly articulated, so that farmers can make their own judgement about whether or not to invest. In addition, in multi-partner campaigns it is essential that partners have a mechanism for agreeing that all materials and interventions are consistent in their interpretation of the technology.

In Africa, assessing the media landscape has to be a pragmatic process of exploring the channel that farmers currently use. However, the landscape is changing fast and dissemination plans can take advantage of new media opportunities with the potential to reach the target audience. There is a need for caution in the use of farmers' surveys. These tend to show a limited number of sources of information which may not include some of the more innovative approaches that can make messages stick.

Communication for development campaigns have mechanisms in place to test the messages and materials produced. The planning of the campaign may well need to be dovetailed to the monitoring and evaluation plan. For example, the mix of channels and formats may vary from location to location to see how different combination of media works in different contexts. The authors are part of delivery teams from a range of organisations that have been working together to deliver integrated multi-media campaigns to reinforce agricultural messages to specific targeted groups e.g. different members of small-scale farming households. Occasionally a campaign may be carried out using one delivery channel only – for example CABI's pilot SMS campaign with Tanzanian farmers.

# Section 1a: Purpose of this guide



This guide aims to help improve socially progressive investment in communication for development in sub-Saharan Africa. Socially progressive investors include organisations that provide philanthropic investment, such as international development assistance from governments or charities. These are investors who are looking for a social return on investment. Equally, we believe this resource can support private sector investors that are looking to build sustainable businesses in Africa. The guide will appeal especially to socially responsive private sector companies such as those operating on the principle of triple-bottom line reporting of their results. This approach means that companies' annual reports encompass economic growth/ return on investment, environmental sustainability and social equity (see section 3 on business case).

The sections are designed to work together to support the development of an investment strategy. Alternatively, each section of the guide can be used as a standalone resource.

This resource is specifically focused on the agricultural sector. The agricultural sector is important to sub-Saharan Africa in terms of economic growth, national food security and household-level livelihoods. It is a sector that has specific challenges, for example climate uncertainty which means that new technologies/messages will need to be adapted to specific agro-ecological zones. In agriculture, the timing of the message is critical – if it arrives too late it will not have any impact until the next season.

Communication for development can be used in agriculture to support adoption of new practices that address the yield gap - the difference between crop yields experienced in Africa and the rest of the world – and encourage new agricultural practices, climate smart farming and sustainable intensification.

The guide covers a number of key questions that we hope will prove useful to socially engaged investors (listed as A – K below) looking to invest in communication for development approaches in the agricultural sector.

- A      What do I need to know specifically about working within Africa?**  
Are there issues specific to the operating environment in Africa that need to be factored into investors' plans?
- B      What do I need to know about communication for development?**  
Communication for development covers a broad range of media and approaches.

**C How much does context matter?**

Context can cover a wide range of issues encompassing gender, social norms, traditions, diet etc. that may have a considerable impact on how a campaign should be planned and delivered. Knowing that a suggested change in practice impinges on social norms is an important consideration.

**D How much do I need to invest to deliver change?**

In order to reach targets for changes in awareness, attitude and behaviour – what is the likely level of investment needed taking into account the cost effectiveness factors above? Media that delivers well on awareness may not provide the detailed information needed for behaviour change and additional investment in the value chain may also be required.

**E How does communication deliver scale effectively, given the diversity within the farming community and their varying information needs?**

There is always a trade-off between the level of farmer interactivity and the need to reach a mass audience. For example, radio is great at getting messages widely disseminated, whilst radio listening clubs that bring together small numbers of farmers to listen to the radio content and discuss the content will help facilitate farmer thought and the decision-making processes that are more likely to lead to adoption of a technology.

**F What is most cost effective?**

Multi-media campaigns have a trade-off between elements that are expensive and very interactive and elements that have a lower unit cost but lack interactivity. In addition, participatory approaches are generally considered to create more effective materials but may cost significantly more to develop.

**G How will I know if it is making a difference?**

Developing strategies to meet the challenges of measuring impact in terms of attitude and short-term or permanent behaviour changes and having the monitoring and evaluation approaches in place to gather the evidence.

**H How do I build in sustainability?**

Communication for development is usually seeking to make a permanent change in knowledge, understanding or behaviour. In reality this will require key messages to be reinforced over time. For example, sustainability may be achieved by increasing the capacity and capability within a delivery partnership.

**I How do you stay on top of innovations in communication models?**

In many cases investors will be looking to invest in communication approaches that have been proven. Some philanthropic investors will be looking to support new approaches to get information to harder to reach audiences such as women or younger farmers.

**J How do I sell the idea internally?**

For many communication for development professionals, long before materials get the opportunity to influence an external audience the case for investment must be made internally.

**K How can investors get the most from the expertise they engage? This will depend on investors agreeing from the outset what success looks like (although delivery teams may feel the needs to manage expectations to keep them realistic).**

Investors will find it useful to create a space where there is mutual accountability and everyone can put their knowledge up for collective examination, in addition to ensuring that there is a team incorporating certain core expertise across a number of areas and contexts in which the work will take - development communication, policy and value chain analysis.

From section 2 onwards there is a common structure to the resource, and content is organised as follows:

- A summary of section
- Action-orientated check-list
- Key issues to inform investment decisions
- Useful references

## **Section 1b: Getting it right in communication for development**



**Communication for Development** was defined during the World Congress on Communication for Development in 2006 as<sup>1</sup>:

*“ComDev is a social process based on dialogue using a broad range of tools and methods. ComDev is about seeking change at different levels including listening, building trust, sharing knowledge and skills, building policies, debating, and learning for sustained and meaningful change. It is not public relations or corporate communications.”*

This guide uses the wording ‘communication for development’ – although the concept/approach is also known by a number of different names – ComDev, DevCom, Communicating with Communities etc.

However, regardless of the name used the underlying principle remains the same – namely, the systematic use of participatory communication methods and tools to facilitate information and knowledge sharing among the stakeholders of a development initiative, in order to achieve common goals.

**Communication for development:** is a participatory and structured process of designing the best strategy and series of actions by which a communication process will achieve the intended objectives. It involves establishing a participatory process that involves the intended stakeholders to determine appropriate communication outputs according to their characteristics, needs, capacities and resources.

There is a trade-off between the amount of genuine participation that can be embodied in a campaign and the scale and reach of the campaign. There is also a trade-off between the desire to deliver campaigns at scale and the desire to put in place methodologies that test different combinations of channels and formats.

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<sup>1</sup> The Rome Consensus (2006) Communication for Development: A major pillar for development and change. Rome, Italy <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTDEVCOMMENG/Resources/RomeConsensus07.pdf>



If we focus on radio as a communication channel we can see how participation and scale work alongside each other.

	Participation	Numbers involved / comments
<b>Pre-production planning</b>	Explore which radio stations will best reach the target farmers  Explore the need for the solution offered to the farmers	Potentially five focus groups of ten people  Will often involve some groups disaggregated by age/gender e.g. younger farmers and women. The extent of this will depend on the targets for campaign
<b>Planning</b>	Explore content with a range of experts including farmers or farmers representatives	Potentially 2-3 farmers as part of the content development workshop
<b>Production</b>	Get out into the field to find farmers to be involved in the pre-recorded element of the program	Usually 5-10 farmer involved in interviews, vox pops or other elements
<b>Broadcast</b>	Farmer audience (effective reach)	Possibly 150,000 farmers listening to at least one episode
	Create polls	Maybe 1,000 farmers contribute - largely focuses on younger men
	Radio listening clubs	Say 10 groups of 25 people - ideally they should be feeding back into the program design and content to help clear up confusion in subsequent broadcasts
<b>Post broadcast</b>	Poll to test usefulness of the program	Maybe 1,000 farmers contribute - largely focuses on younger men because of their access to mobile phones and phone credit
	Surveys	Interview 1,000 farmers to test listenership numbers

In most radio campaigns, the amount of direct involvement by farmers will always be a small percentage of the overall audience. However, active and regular involvement of farmers at key stages in the development of program should ensure that the content resonates with target audiences.

See Appendix 2: CABI Campaign Design Template

## Section 1c: Getting it right in agriculture



Communication for development programs in agriculture can learn many lessons from similar programs that have led to behaviour change as a result of public health education. There are, however, certain issues that are unique to the agriculture sector.

First of these factors is that timing is critical. The agricultural calendar is unforgiving. Farmers need information ahead of the planting season. Too often investment decisions are made so late that it is hard for the investment to meet the objectives. If information on seed varieties or spacing arrives at a farm after planting, it cannot have any impact that season and probably will have no impact at all. Late decision-making may also leave little time for working with the target audience or getting the approvals necessary to embed long-term sustainability.

Good communication materials can be a long time in the planning and delivery. Working with farmers and mandate holders to validate the technology, co-create messages and get materials into production and distribution schedules does not happen overnight. The tighter the time pressure, the harder it becomes to deliver quality campaigns or key messages and include participatory approaches and testing.

The partners contributing to this report have been working on pilot projects that aim to target different members of farming households with nuanced *just in time* campaign messages about agricultural technologies, sympathetic to sustainable agricultural intensification. There are two factors here. In some of the campaigns, media channels reinforce each other. In other campaigns different members of the household get access to different channels or formats. For example, the parents may see posters and leaflets and the younger farmers may be targeted with graphic-led comic stories. The thinking here is that greater equity in access to information on agriculture can lead to changes in who can contribute to discussions and potentially change decision-making processes.

To better plan we need to know how information travels for example, when and how do farmers share information, which are the trusted intermediaries for different sorts of information. It is also critical that access to information is clearly aligned to the farming calendar – information on good land preparation half way through the growing season will not be effective.

Shujaaz and FIPS-Africa case study

**Raymond Jumah from FIPS-Africa shares case notes from a youth media experiment in farming families in Tanzania in 2015, showing how information travels**

Veronica Victorice of Mtego wa Simba village in Tanzania has a different relationship with her father now – and it is all thanks to a comic.

As part of their innovation communication pilot projects, CABI commissioned two stories in [Shujaaz](#), a graphically illustrated comic produced by Well Told Story. 600,000 comics are distributed every month in Kenya. CABI wanted to explore if the same approach could work in Tanzania, where the Shujaaz brand does not have a following. So, this experiment looked at how young people could be used as a conduit for integrated soil fertility management innovations using a comic story.

CABI worked in partnership with Farm Input Promotions-Africa (FIPS-Africa) to produce an 8-page single story comic. The story was translated into Kiswahili. FIPS-Africa had acted as technical consultants when the story was first developed, so the advice in the comic was consistent with their approach. 16,000 smallholder farming families were targeted and the 40 FIPS-Africa advisors in Morogoro rural district helped with the distribution. The story features a young woman and her grandmother reviewing the options for planting maize ([see bottom of page 3](#))<sup>2</sup>. They looked at different approaches attempted by their neighbours and decided to apply three approaches – improved seed, fertilizer and manure. They discovered integrated soil fertility management from first principles.

**But did it work?...**

FIPS-Africa returned to the villages when the harvests were in and talked to the young people about the impact the comic had had on their families. Here access to information and the timing of the information dissemination were key to challenging gender stereotypes – as a woman and a young person Veronica previously had no voice in the farm. But then things changed... Veronica's day starts early in the morning, doing household chores, cleaning the compound and leaving for the farm to weed, cultivate or harvest, depending on the season. She said: "The hardest part of my day is working in the farm but it has lately become interesting because my dad and I engage in discussions freely unlike before when he would wait to instruct me. The comic created a platform for discussions on maize farming."

In the past Veronica saw her father as rigid and hard to engage with on important issues. But now they sit down and brainstorm on how to improve production, with Veronica leading the conversation, using the Malkia story from the comic. Her father had seen the comic and asked his daughter to read it for him so he could understand the messages. "When I looked at the book I noticed it was a story. My father liked the illustration but the fonts in the book were too small for my dad to read so he made me the teacher. We had three conversations just discussing Malkia and I loved these discussions. I also had an opportunity to discuss my career with dad. He is really keen to ensure that I progress to university." Having to weed less will certainly provide more time for Veronica to study.

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<sup>2</sup> Shujaaz comic Tanzania. Ukulima bora: Malkia aboresha mazao.  
<http://africasoilhealth.cabi.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/1Shujaaz-for-Tanzania.pdf>



As the two shared and compared the modern and traditional ways of planting, a special bond was building between father and daughter. Veronica explains: “Dad argued that there was no need to use fertilizer on our farms but manure. I made him understand that it was necessary because soils get depleted every season we plant.” Veronica remembers her dad’s position on manure application before the comic. He believed in broadcasting manure when planting to enrich the whole plot with nutrients. This had a big impact on Veronica’s workload: “Because of this we could weed three to four times a season while other farmers weed twice - a few weeks after planting and when maize is knee high. There is a page where the characters are arguing over what improved yields. It brought out the message so clearly that my dad and I easily understood the need for a combination of good practices, such as spacing, use of improved seed and planting one seed per hole, as the core requirements for a good harvest.”

Last season they planted the DK8053 variety using the 25 cm x 75 cm spacing, as taught by the FIPS-Africa advisor. They did not broadcast farmyard manure as before but followed instructions from the comic to micro-dose it. “My dad and I decided to combine the three things for better yields. We harvested seven bags from the quarter acre of land. We used to harvest five bags from the same plot. The comic has helped me bond with my dad. I love the fact that we implemented things from the comic and they worked.”

### **Start of a special relationship**

Today, Veronica and her father enjoy a special relationship built from every minute they sat down reading the comic together, grasping the message and applying it on their plot of land. The teenager is happy that the comic was able to demystify her dad who she had for a very long time mistaken to be uncaring.

“After reading the comic I bought the 2 kg of DK8053 for two reasons: one was that I had tried the seed on a 5 metre x 5 metre plot and liked its performance and another because my daughter would help me refer to the comic as we implemented new things.” says Msise. Veronica has also been spreading the word. Seven of her young friends shared the comic so their neighbours also received these messages.

## Section 1d: Getting it right in agriculture in Africa



Getting agricultural related communications right in Africa, as elsewhere across the globe, relies on ensuring local contexts are taken into account, by listening to and working with local communities (as well as technical experts), to adapt approaches and messages, according to the enabling environment for effective communications.

Mandate holders, such as national research bodies, for example play an essential role in Africa in validating the technical content of the message. These are usually bodies known and trusted by both members of small scale farming households and local and national government. However, from a communication for development perspective farmer knowledge and farmer-led innovations are key but are often overlooked instead of being recognised and included among recommendations.

### **Targeting innovation**

New product innovations need more consideration and more collaboration between the philanthropic investors and the private sector, due to the scale of investment and timescales needed before the innovations become mainstreamed. Our research showed that farmers only share information about farming techniques that they have tried and tested.

In the case of inoculant, IITA has estimated that it may take up to 15 years from product registration by the government to mainstreaming of the product by small scale farming households. In this case, there is a clear role for philanthropic investors to raise awareness ahead of the private sector differentiating their brands in the market place.

Philanthropic investors may target the most vulnerable in society; whilst the private sectors might primarily target those most likely and able to pay for services or products. Whilst profits on sales may be small, the small-scale farming sector in Africa is vast and the scale of operations can make profitable and sustainable business for input providers.

One farm input in Africa, however, remains doggedly expensive – that is the cost of borrowing, which has a major impact on the investment decisions of small scale farmers. It also has an impact on the returns on investment African farmers require to be sustainable.

## **When creating agricultural related communication materials consider the following:**

### **Language**

The number of languages and dialects spoken in many African countries can create challenges for the production and dissemination of communication materials.

For example: In 2017 a Gender and the Legume Alliance (GALA) campaign in Ghana produced films and radio broadcasts in the local languages of Dagbani and Gonja. This limited the areas where the materials could be presented within the region. In 2018 a further 6 languages were offered – but this still didn't give comprehensive coverage. The team had to work hard to align the choice of languages for the films with the areas where agro-dealers were stocking materials.

Print materials should usually be initially produced in the official language. A good way to test the best language is to establish the language used for teaching science in secondary schools. This is a good strategy to try and overcome the challenges that may sometimes arise in using local terms e.g. where a single word or phrase might be used to denote fertilizer and manure.

Broadcast outputs should usually be in local languages, even though this may mean more work initially in the development phase. In Ghana for example English is the official language, but there are also some 250 languages and dialects spoken in the country. In Tanzania the official language is Kiswahili, but there are also more than 100 languages and dialects spoken.

### **Gender considerations and social norms**

Communication for development approaches require sensitivity to gender considerations and an understanding of social norms. In most countries in Africa there are strict labour rules about the work children can do, however, the farming household is the unit of production and children do contribute to agricultural tasks when not at school. In many cases women and children receive information on farming innovations second hand for example from older male members of the household.

Women play an important role in farming in sub-Saharan Africa. The contribution of women to labour in African agriculture is regularly quoted in the range of 60-80 per cent<sup>3</sup>. Men and women may take different roles within agricultural production, and decision-making process and patterns may change overtime. Part of the appeal of a campaign-based approach is that decision-making processes change over time if access to information is more equitable.

Many farming households are female headed, with women leading on all farming decisions. In other households, although women effectively become the household head as their partners are working away the household decision-making processes may not be so clear cut. Pragmatic issues also play a role – such as how women get access to agricultural inputs. Even when they are willing and able to pay, they may be beholden to third parties to get inputs on their behalf.

Cultural norms often suggest, or impose, the gender segregation of roles. Women usually take responsibility for the food security crops for example that will ensure the family has access to nutritious food. Women seeking to access land for farming often find that they are often given the least productive land. Men often take responsibility for the cash crops and land preparation, whereas women are often actively involved in post-harvest tasks including adding value to crops.

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<sup>3</sup> World Bank (2015) Policy Working paper; How Much of the Labor in African Agriculture Is Provided by Women? (<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/979671468189858347/pdf/WPS7282.pdf>)

Do males and females require different information, or is the factor of ability to pay more important? Women often want more information on post-harvest value additions and nutritional information as these will impact positively on household food security. But the roles they play are an important consideration whether that be growing crops for family consumption or producing significant cash crops for sale.

### **Differing age groups**

Many commentators use under 35 to determine younger farmers; definitions of youth again vary but are usually mid-teens to mid-twenties; older people as a term is often self-defining but can be anything from 55 plus. The growth of digital media means that it is possible to target younger farmers. The youth can be entrepreneurial and willing to innovate. However, they may well be allocated land with insecure tenure, which will impact on their willingness to favour sustainable agricultural solutions.

### **Ability to pay**

Ability to pay is a critical issue in terms of offering useful advice to farmers – this is sometimes called a stepwise approach to recommendations. These require sound agronomic evidence to support what to do at entry level – i.e. if you have \$20 to invest in the technology versus having the resources to support full implementation. Is it better to apply the recommended fertilizer level to half the crop – or half the dose over the whole field?

### **Family-based learning**

In Ghana, CABI has worked with Countrywise Communications on a series of village-based screenings. These are events held in the village at dusk. The screenings are timed to happen after the chores have been completed and the evening meal and prayers have also finished. Very roughly the audience breakdown for the first year of the campaign was 50% of the audience was school-aged children, around 30% were women and 20% men.

There are two significant factors here. First, women outnumbered the men because most of the barriers to attendance, that exist for other events, had been removed. Second, families are learning together. Family based learning reflects the fact that the family is the unit of production and means everyone in the family can have equal access to the information. This appears to happen naturally without a requirement to push for gender equity at the events.

Ernesta Sanga, a PhD student at an Institution: Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Morogoro, Tanzania worked as part of the Scaling-up Improved Legume Technologies (SILT) project in Tanzania. She can demonstrate that access to information through radio, demonstration and extension agent was higher among men than women and youth. When she explored understanding of seed selection technologies 24% of men were informed, 6% of women and 17% of youth.

Age, access to land, education, and farm size were seen to be statistically significant in influencing adoption of improved common bean technologies. Sanga also found significant gender differences in relation to access to improved common bean varieties.

Men had slightly greater access to information through demonstrations of land preparation, seed selection, fertilizer application, planting and spacing, weed control and disease and pest control technologies. She also found that it was the husbands who were most likely to make decisions concerning experimentation with improved common beans.

### **Digital divide**

In Africa, studies suggest that women are 50 percent less likely to use the internet than men. In addition to ownership and access, lack of control over the use of technology can be another barrier for women. If there is a radio in the home, it is often controlled by the man, and they listen to the programme the man wants (Kristin Davis, IFPRI). Furthermore, in many countries, levels of numeracy and literacy are also lower for women, which means that even if they have access to information through mobile phones, they may not be able to translate that into improved farming practice.

### **African business models**

There are millions of small-scale farmers. This means that relatively low margins can be made on the sale of some inputs or service provision, provided that they are sold at scale and still create viable businesses along an agricultural value chain.

### **Policy environment**

On a continental level in Africa, programs to promote agricultural development tend to focus on commercial and niche crops with an aim of moving small scale subsistence farmers to commercial orientated production. Some crops of importance to farmers, are not in this category e.g. common beans, cassava and potato. This can pose challenges in promoting these crops with communication materials.

Many African countries are decentralizing decision-making practices to regions or sub-regions. This can mean that programs working across a number of sub-regions can be challenging.

**Extension services face considerable challenges** in Africa – including the number of farmers each extension officer is expected to serve. There are also systemic problems in many of the services that mean that the most up-to-date information is not shared with extension teams and is therefore not available to farmers.

Extension officers increasingly work with farmer groups, but lack training materials that would facilitate effective group work. Working with groups also means that it is usually the group leaders who determine the number of women and/or younger farmers that attend the meetings.

When communication for development project plans involve extension teams they will often need access to financial resources for transport, phone credits or other consumables, and in some cases they may expect cost recovery for their time.

**Harmonisation of seed and other regulatory systems** can impact of the types of technology available and the speed with which farmers in a region can access them. In Tanzania as part of the Scaling-up Improved Legume Technologies project, AFAP and IITA initiated some policy discussions with key opinion formers just ahead of the campaigns.

### **Subsidy schemes**

Many African run subsidy schemes reduce the price of inputs for key crops such as maize. The subsidy schemes vary. They can involve physical distribution of the inputs or they can be voucher schemes. In the worst cases, these schemes can damage the development of the local agro input dealers.

The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** is the name given to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted at a 2015 UN Summit. The SDGs, also known as Global Goals, build on the success of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). They

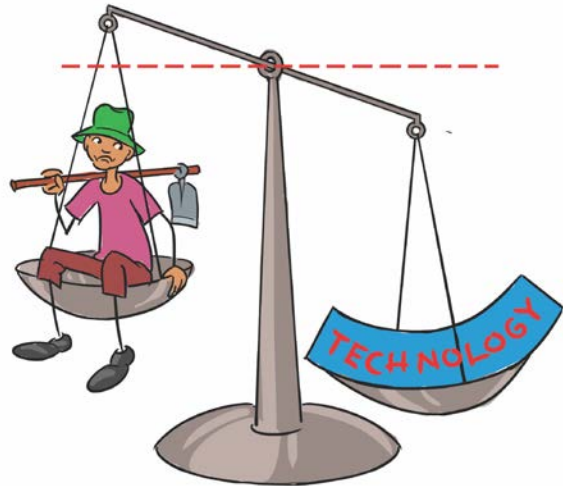


mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind.

**Agenda 2063** is the African Union's strategic framework for the socio-economic transformation of the continent over 50 years. It builds on, and seeks to accelerate the implementation of past and existing continental initiatives for growth and sustainable development.

## Section 2:

# Is there an appropriate agricultural technology for sharing with farmers



### Summary of section 2: Is the technology appropriate for sharing?

Investment in the design and roll out of agricultural campaigns needs to be based on agricultural technologies that are proven to be suitable and advantageous for farmers. The technology needs to solve an issue that has been defined as a problem by farmers.

Agricultural technologies can encompass:

- New land preparation methods
- New planting methods
- New ways of increasing the fertility of soil
- New seed varieties that have higher yield, more nutritious produce, better resistance to pests, greater tolerance of drought, etc.
- New methods of controlling weeds, pests or diseases
- New ways of harvesting, threshing or storing produce

Some technologies represent an incremental change – a new seed variety or a change in the spacing. Other technologies represent a significant level of innovation, and a completely new idea may take a long time to take hold. These long timescales do not make the investment unviable or unsustainable, they simply reflect the time it takes for innovation to take hold. This is where socially engaged investors can ease the path for the technology by building awareness and capacity building along the information.

The technology needs to be suitable for scaling-up, which requires an understanding of its economic, social and environmental impact, and ensuring that economic issues work along the entire value chain.

It is important that investors take into account that not all research will deliver viable technologies and funders will need to be prepared to write-off some investment and not push for scale-up activity where results are not promising.

**Action-orientated check-list to determine the appropriateness of the technology:**

1. Does it solve a farmer-identified need?
2. Have farmer-led innovations to meet this need been evaluated?
3. Is the technology culturally appropriate to context?
4. Are there any opposing views or social norms about this technology?
5. Are there any aspects of this technology that could decrease opportunities for particular individuals within identified gender groups?
6. Is the agricultural technology clearly defined?
7. Is it proven in a similar agro-ecological zone?
8. Has the technology passed all regulatory hurdles?
9. Are the benefits clearly defined?
10. Are the risks clearly articulated and mitigation strategies offered?
11. Do the rewards outweigh any associated risks?
12. Is there a suitable return on investment all along the supply chain?
13. Is the supply chain gearing up to supply inputs?
14. Are there functioning markets in the location?
15. Are market brokerage and linkages in place?
16. Are there any aspects of this technology that have a negative impact on the economy?
17. Are mechanisms in place to ensure that the technology is consistently and professionally articulated?

Farm Radio International has developed a checklist to screen the appropriateness of agricultural innovations put forward for broadcast on the radio (see appendix 1).

## **Key issues to inform investment decisions**

The term agricultural technologies covers a range of different approaches, methods, practices, and innovations aimed at improving agricultural production, productivity and livelihoods.

It is vital to work with farmers from the start to ensure that the technology or approach meets an identified need. It is also key to consult the intermediaries (such as agro-dealers or extension teams) that also make up the target audience. It is key to prove that the technology is needed and/or appropriate. Shujaaz/ Well Told Story refers to this as ground-truthing – this ensures that the communications are developed with a realistic and shared understanding of the real position on the ground.<sup>1</sup>

There may well be a farmer-led innovation that deals with the technological challenge in a way that the research community has not considered. Adopting a communication for development approach ensures key baseline information relating to existing agricultural practices is captured at the start of the process. This data may provide evidence of current agricultural practices that are based on sound science and are proven – and these should be presented as viable options. Often, simple farmer-led innovations are overlooked in favour of more complex and expensive solutions. Using a communication for development approach will help to establish the range of community-level options in addition to the research-led solutions.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.welltoldstory.com/tag/groundtruth/>

Baseline information can also be used for ascertaining community attitudes, behaviours and social norms which must be understood from the start as they can heavily influence both the presentation and successful uptake of key agricultural messages. What can appear at first to be poor agronomic practice may be linked to cultural issues – for example crop burning in Ghana is illegal, but it is a way of catching bush meat and has been a hard practice to discourage.

This information will also highlight existing task allocations between men, women and children which will help to ensure responsible investors can take care not to advocate for technologies that could create significant burdens for particular groups - especially women and children.

All technologies proposed for scale-up need to have been proven. This means that they need to be assessed for their appropriateness in relation to the type of agro-ecological zone where the campaign is proposed and provide a suitable return on investment (profit) and not just an increase in production levels. Farmers ought to have a clear view on the return to expect from their investment.

New technologies can be as simple as recommending the best spacing for planting seed. This sort of recommendation requires very little investment (it may even be a saving of time or inputs) and, therefore, has very few barriers to adoption.

However, often application of a technology requires farmers to purchase one or more agricultural inputs. In some cases this will be a simple substitution – for example, discussing with a farming household a change of seed variety that will impact positively on the family and their farm for example improved nutritional content, improved yield, better adapted to climate uncertainty, or improved impact on soil fertility.

New technologies can be complementary to something farmers are already doing. For example, encouraging the use of treated seed to help farmers grow more or lose less.

In some cases the inputs being proposed to farmers are part of a new and innovative technology. Where an innovation is being offered to small-scale farmers, such as inoculant as a seed treatment for soybean and other legumes, it is likely to take a considerable time for the technology to become mainstreamed. In these cases, key messages will change throughout the life of the campaign- moving from raising awareness of the new technology, to brand recognition of the rival solutions. This may happen over a period of 10-15 years.

Socially progressive investors should be prepared to be involved for the long haul to see change mainstreamed.

This is because the technology has to make sense in the context of a shared understanding of good agricultural practices. There is a tension in the campaign planning process between simple messages clearly articulating benefits of a new technology, clear guidance on how to apply to optimize the technology and/or meet market requirements and different players wanting to build or maintain a brands position in the market place. More comprehensive approaches to sharing information can support different gendered information needs.

### **Managing supply and demand of inputs with information flows ...**

In the case of the Scaling-Up Improved Legume Technologies in Tanzania, the authors found that agro-dealers did not believe that farmers would buy soybean or common bean seed. This made it hard to establish effective supply chains. The project had invested in seed multiplication and worked extensively through wholesalers to try to increase the supply of seed. Detailed market research from farmers suggesting they wanted to purchase seed was shared but simply not believed.

A similar issue emerged in Ghana relating to agro-dealers' reluctance to stock inoculant. As part of the campaign farmers telephone contacts were collected. SMSs went to farmers encouraging them to talk to the agro-dealers about their legume input requirements. Unbeknownst to the campaign team few agro-dealers had in fact stocked the inputs, required by the campaign.

Research amongst the agro-dealers after the growing season had finished showed an increase in confidence amongst them borne out of the increased enquiry levels from farmers. In subsequent research in late 2017, over 90% of agro-dealers were keen to stock inoculant and over 75% wanted to stock both legume fertilizer and improved seeds – including legume seeds.

Generally, the seed sector likes to encourage farmers to buy new legume seed every year. Replacing seed every three years is not likely to have much impact on yields, if best practices are not followed. The seed sector is unlikely to have the capacity to support new seed purchase every year. This has led to some robust discussion on the best advice on seed and variety selection.

This shows how important it is to fully understand the risks and rewards associated with changes that are needed in the value chain to make new inputs available to farmers. Barriers are often more complex than a lack of information. Agro-dealers are cautious about the ability of campaigns to change farmer purchasing behaviour and cannot take on the financial risk of the campaign, especially because many of the inputs do not have a value after the end of the season.

Investors also need to test their assumptions about the amount of a given input needed to make it appropriate to invest in communication for development. Investors will need to make their own judgments – but balancing supply and demand for new technological inputs and ensuring that input and output markets are aligned – requires considerable thought.

Investors need to be confident that the technology has met all of the legal requirements for release into a given territory and has been agreed as suitable for use by the local experts. This will also require ensuring that suitable national and international environmental standards have been met which can involve field trials and tests by government agencies.

The minimum legal requirement will be registration by a mandated national regulatory body. In the case of changes such as recommended spacing for example, it may be a requirement for the technology to be signed off by the extension service or an agricultural research agency. The authors have found that commercial telecoms providers want SMS or voice messages validated by a national agency, in order to limit liability in relation to the provision of advice.

The agricultural technology must offer a suitable return on investment. The cost of borrowing is high in most African countries. This means that the return on investment promised by the

technology needs to be sufficient to cover the cost of borrowing and reward the risk-taking by the farmer. Whilst other benefits can include improved nutrition and environmental and social improvements – these need to speak to the defined needs of farmers.

Some technologies offer multiple benefits – yield, nutritional, and environmental. Understanding this can be useful in building a consortium of investors who may have a specific focus. However, the benefits have to make sense to individual farmers, if they are to result in sustainable change. In some cases farmers will be persuaded to work towards long-term benefits for their farm and income, but only if they have some security in their land tenure.

With the exception of projects looking at household consumption and nutrition, returns on investment will only be realised when a market can be accessed. Farmers may need access to dynamic information such as market prices and which buyers are active in the market. Investors also need to be confident that the markets can absorb the additional crop yields. In the case of cash crops in particular this often requires mechanisms that link farmers to markets. It is not enough, for example to look at the level of imports of a commodity and assume that increasing the acreage of that crop will automatically lead to farmers accessing the markets. In some globally traded commodities, such as soybean, prices can vary dramatically as a result of the quality of harvests in other countries. Poor overseas harvests can see small-scale African farmers benefiting, whilst good harvests may result in the dumping of soybean cake often at a price below the cost of production by African small-scale farmers.

Researchers need to be encouraged to share up-to-date information and they also need to pre-test technologies with local farmers to ensure they are suitable for each specific district, region or country-wide context. It is important to be realistic about claims made for yield improvements, however tempting it may be to headline the best possible results – e.g. farmers have sometimes been given information about potential yields based on trials carried out on research stations and these are rarely fully replicable by farmers. Again a communication for development approach plays a key role here in ensuring farmer experience is encapsulated in a shared evidence base and ongoing farmer feedback is facilitated.

Not all research projects will lead to technologies that are suitable for sharing. The technologies that are developed into scale-up campaigns need to reflect the defined needs of farmers. Scale-up campaigns should never automatically flow from a research project without a review of the business case for the technology. Socially responsible investors in research programs may want to include a break between the research phase of a project and the scale-up phase. This will mean scale-up investment can be focused into the most promising technologies.

The needs of farmers must be assessed carefully – especially in relation to new technologies. Farmers may not have a need for inoculant for example, but they do have a desire to improve the yield from their soybean crop and to improve the fertility of their soil without purchasing expensive fertilizer. It is therefore important to present the benefits of a technology in a way that resonates with the already self-defined needs of farmers.

Currently, communication for development is not systematically used to test the need for research into a particular technology – although some attempts have been made to put researchers closer to farmers such as the Millennium Villages Project which addresses the root causes of extreme poverty, taking a holistic, community-led approach to sustainable development.

Funders also need to ensure that the technologies advocated do not have a negative impact on the environment, although there are often trade-offs to be considered here. For example

campaign messages may focus on encouraging less pesticide use, whilst still needing to address a threat from a particularly virulent pest. Profitable approaches may encourage farmers to expand the areas they farm, rather than intensifying the areas already under cultivation. Some of these factors are easy to assess, whilst others are much more difficult to predict. Sustainable intensification of agriculture approaches may offer a win-win for the environment and farmers.

The technology needs to be easily adoptable by the target audience – in this case small-scale farming households. For example, very few farmers have access to measuring equipment and so instructions for applying the technology need to be based on the use of items that can be sourced locally like water bottles.

In some cases technologies can be specific to a particular context. This means that messages may need to be adopted for different locations (which may change the soil type or the climate in the agro-ecological zone) or the crop varieties advocated.

When a technology has passed the test to ensure it is appropriate, the next step is to create a core document setting out the shared understanding of the technology. This process has different names – CABI develops a “technology and messaging brief”, while Shujaaz refers to this as a “wireframe”. However, regardless of name, the process is important to ensure that all messages generated are consistent. Too often two projects working in an area will be advocating different interpretations of the same technology - for example 1 seed every 20 cm versus 2 seeds every 10 cm. These inconsistencies are often cited by farmers as reasons why they don't try out the recommendations.

Look at Section 4 on partnership to see how multi-stakeholder engagement can support better results.

## **Resources**

- Plantwise Pesticide Red List a guide to the banned pesticides [www.plantwise.org/pesticide-restrictions](http://www.plantwise.org/pesticide-restrictions)
- Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM) materials library <http://africasoilhealth.cabi.org>

## Section 3: The Business Case



### Summary of section 3

Investors need to think about building a business case for investment in sensible ways to implement cost effective communication. This includes:

- socially progressive ways to think about the bottom line
- the learning about sustaining your investment and planning timescales, and
- key things to have in place if you want a useful return

A strong business case should help 'sell-in' the idea of investment in communication models with any organisation or increasingly across partnerships of organisations.

### Action-orientated check list for developing effective business cases for a communication for development (behaviour change) activity

1. What is the activity trying to achieve?
  - Introduce a completely new technology?
  - Link together existing practices in a new way?
  - Introduce a new crop?
  - Substitute one product for a superior one?
2. Does the activity clearly identify the rational case for investment in the technology by the farmer? Note: It is important to focus on the specific benefits to the farmer not focus on public good.
3. Has activity got a clear objective that is appropriate to the farmer's familiarity with the technology? e.g. raising awareness, creating interest in trialing or consolidating/ mainstreaming the technology, switching brands/ products
4. Does this activity form part of a longer-term or more broadly reaching set of activities delivered by the same team or others?
5. Are the channels and formats selected appropriate to the farmer's familiarity with the technology? e.g. raising awareness, creating interest in trialing or consolidating/ mainstreaming the technology.
6. Are there logical assumptions about how long it will take to get the desired change embedded within the farming community? Is the length of the planned activity appropriate to the communication challenge? From awareness to mainstreaming can



be a very long journey.

7. Are there social and cultural norms that will increase the costs of operation of the activity? For example, training women to carry out training of women, rather than using the existing extension team.
8. Is the timescale for the development of the activity and materials realistic in relation to the part of the agricultural cycle which is the appropriate entry point for the activity?
9. Does this timescale allow time for ongoing consultation with the target audience and testing of materials within community settings?
10. Is the proposed approach cost-effective in terms of the scale of potential impact resulting from the activity, when compared to other communication approaches that could reach the same target audiences?
11. Does the activity make an appropriate trade-off between awareness raising at scale and more nuanced approaches that are more likely to achieve trialling and sustained adoption?
12. Has the campaign factored in any limiting factors? For example, if there is only a limited supply of an input then this might shape the proposed scale of the communication activity.
13. Have the full costs for the activity been identified and assessed in terms of likely return on investment for awareness and trialling?
14. If non-cash items are included (in-kind support is included such as time from funded project workers) is the value of this input fully costed so that the costs of replication of the activity in subsequent years can be understood?
15. Is there a clear understanding of the costs of creating reusable media assets e.g. a film, or the designs for a series of leaflets, versus the costs of screening the films or printing the leaflets? Is this linked clearly to future plans to repurpose the material?
16. Is there a budget for testing the impact of the campaign? [See section 6]

The checklist in section 2 above should help to create the business case for the agricultural technology.

## Key issues to inform investment decisions

Socially progressive investment is typically about keeping an eye on a **triple bottom line**: contributing to economic growth (potentially including your own), sustaining the environment and life systems (as opposed to depleting them), and upholding the principles of social justice (ideally redressing social inequities). This approach is fundamental to the sustainable development paradigm.

**Cost-effectiveness** is understood as a way of understanding value for money and establishes whether the costs of inputs are appropriate to the level of outcomes. Cost-effectiveness includes:

1. **The scale of impact possible** (potentially significant given the aims of social and cultural change or development of new markets) this goes well beyond a single season of sales for instance.
2. **The trade-off between reach and the likelihood of sustained adoption** (where the sustained adaptation takes more sophisticated and sustained effort) and

3. **Realistic idea of what are realistic costs for various activities associated with the communication for development activities.** For instance, because the cost of living is lower this does not mean that all activities will be necessarily cheaper because in rural and deprived areas, transportation can be comparatively more expensive. Often in pilot campaigns discounts and in-kind support (especially project staff time) is made available, which may not be forthcoming when the campaign is mainstreamed. This can impact significantly on budgets for implementation.

An understanding of context shapes the purpose and expectations of the communication investment, which in turn allows **planning to maximize impact** and return on investment. This means making sure that a number of features are considered as part of an enabling environment. These factors include:

- the timing of the planting and growing season (farmers are more risk averse when they have less money for instance);
- the need to consider input availability, market incentives, access to labour and the related costs, overall costs of adoption,
- policy and regulatory framework.
- a range of social norms (socially constructed beliefs and practices) which may support or frustrate adoption [These are explored in section 2].

A communication for development campaign can support the cultivation of an enabling environment. However, there is a need for realism and the planning timeframe for change at scale, and therefore the appropriate objectives at specific points in the campaign. Think where, when, by whom, and how this will be achieved.

New innovations can take a long time to embed. Partners to the SILT project suggested 15 years was a realistic timeframe to mainstream a relatively simple technical solution of applying inoculant to legume seed.

Within that **continuum of uptake**, communication can play different functions and have different features – from formative research mode to social marketing to advocacy. This is a process that runs from awareness of the technology, through trialing the product to adoption of the technology. It is a process that goes from innovators being involved to mainstream uptake at scale. And, therefore it is also a process which has seen the supply chain grow to a similar pace to demand.

Investors need to recognize the environment is dynamic for communication and for agricultural technology. The rise of precision agriculture has also allowed farmers and the industrial complex around them to acknowledge the value of working within specific contexts. It is therefore not helpful to assume that a single intervention/technology is a **silver bullet** or panacea that is going to fix everything, forever.

It is best to plan within the investment to allow adaptation and monitoring of emerging contexts and opportunities. For instance, producing a film which is expected to roll-out across the country for two years would need to allow budgets and time to re-edit for updated versions. It can be helpful to break down the objectives for a specific campaign so it reflects crucial but realistic advances on an issue.

It is important to plan activities ahead of time to make sure **dissemination and communication activities** are in line with the timing of farmers' information needs relating to the season. If this is not done it will compromise the impact of the investment.

**Sustainability comes in three levels** and it is useful to be clear which matters most at which point in the campaign roll-out.

1. **Sustainability of the communication intervention:** For instance, how long does a radio series need to be broadcast or how long can an SMS campaign be maintained? It is worth noting that a campaign can be regularly intermittent (e.g. at the beginning of the rainy season for a number of years). One information blast rarely achieves sustained behaviour change.
2. **Sustainability of the capacity** or capability associated with a communication intervention: This might be the hardware, like transport used by a theatre group, or the skills developed by illustrators. Some capacity development may be needed. While it may increase the upfront costs, it could deliver savings down the line, given the length of mainstreaming campaigns. Or it could improve the effectiveness of the delivery environment for subsequent communication for development approaches, ensuring more expertise can be procured locally.
3. **Sustainability of impact.** This final level is important because reach does not automatically equate to sustained change in behaviour. Some technologies are specific to a current situation and may not be observed on farms/households over time due to changes in cropping systems and farmer preferences. On the other hand, innovations targeting holistic messages, such as nutritional diversity, may be observed over time despite changes in preferences. It is important to reflect on the expected, or desired, sustainability of changes in behaviour or environment and to assess the value for money against this level of outcome.

**Local partnerships and local buy-in** are crucial for cost-effectiveness and sustainability no matter what the strategic priorities are. In practical terms this may involve local participation in the planning, assessment and delivery of the communication models. See section 4, below, for a more detailed assessment of how to make partnerships work.

#### **Useful references**

- Find advocates in your area [The C4D Network](#)
- Find resources on evidence and planning [The Communication Initiative Global Network](#)

## Section 4: Partnerships



### Summary of section 4: Partnerships

There are many ways of setting up and managing partnerships that drive successful communication campaigns. Social investors need to ensure that the variety of roles associated with successful partnership working are clearly defined, allocated, communicated and maintained. Partnership agreements can help with this and can also map out ownership and use of property, especially intellectual property generated by the partnership.

### Action-orientated checklist: Partnership

1. Do the partners have shared values in relation to social equity, environmental approaches, and appropriate returns on investment?
2. Are these values embedded at an organisational level or within an individual?
3. Do members of the partnership have a history of working together?
4. Does the communication for development approach have champions within the partner organisations?
5. Is there trust between the partners both within their working practices and partnership agreements?
6. Are the partners prepared to invest in time and resources into the communication for development activity?
7. Does the partnership enjoy an equitable balance between the people with good knowledge of the target audiences and the experts supporting the technology?
8. Are there clear mechanisms for setting work programs and partner responsibilities?
9. Is there a partner responsible for coordination and oversight of the work of the partnership? Leadership in a genuine partnership involves a non-hierarchical leader based on facilitation and structures to share information effectively.
10. Does the partnership include knowledge partners? They generate scientific content and provide technologies ready for upscaling. They mainly consist of researchers and a key role can include validation of materials and approaches developed by the partners.
11. Does the partnership include delivery partners? They provide dissemination channels for diffusion of technologies which could include SMS, radio, print providers among others.
12. Does the partnership include value-chain partners? They facilitate supply of inputs to clients and sustain supply chains or they facilitate offset of production from the field.
13. Does the partnership include policy-related partners? They inform the policy environment and create conducive atmosphere for the project to efficiently disseminate technologies to achieve impact.
14. Does the partnership include learning partners? They embed learning from the

campaign into a learning or training and development environment to ensure that the approach can be replicated or adapted to new communication challenges.

15. Have all partners fully costed their involvement for tasks and meetings to plan and coordinate activity?
16. Have all assumptions about partner in-kind contributions been tested?
17. Does the allocation of task take into account skills, knowledge and mandates of the partners?
18. Are mechanisms in place to ensure all partners deliver the same core messages to agreed technical specification?
19. Do working practices in the partnership ensure there is no duplication of effort? For example, combining methodologies to jointly collect material or test communications products designed for the campaign?
20. Have partners agreed with each other and with funders regarding the ownership of any intellectual property and or data collected during the campaign?

## Key issues to inform investment decisions

### Getting started

**Shared values between the partners are a key part of a successful partnership** for socially engaged investors. Shared values in this instance are likely to involve something similar to a triple bottom line approach to judging the success of the organisation /project. This approach looks at how the work program contributes to economic growth, supports social justice and safeguards the environment. It is important that the values are embedded in the organisation as a whole, rather than in just one person in the organisation.

Personnel change over time and partnerships need to be resilient to these changes. Motivations for investment may be philanthropic (charity and public sector to create a public good) or delivering a brand, product, or promotional strategy (parastatals and public sector).

Collaborative working may **require a partnership agreement**, or in some cases a memorandum of understanding, to clarify any issues not covered by the contracts or funding agreements. In a high trust environment, these may not be necessary.

One key issue to address upfront is setting out ownership and usage of any **intellectual property rights** such as designs, media assets and research data and market research data that generates lists of contact addresses. Where applicable these should be the subject of a data sharing/ access agreement. If data or information is to be open access, the agreement should clarify potential platforms to host data/information.

### Key pointers

Identifying partners capable of offering **matching funds or in-kind support** in the campaign, can be critical to establishing a successful communication for development program. In-kind support could include utilizing free established distribution channels. For example, Well Told Story, publishers of the youth media platform Shujaaz comic, has an interesting distribution model.

In Tanzania, Coca-Cola distributes 420,000 comics to their small shops for free collection 14-25 year olds passing by their shops. Six radio stations in Tanzania and over 20 in Kenya provide free airtime for the nightly Shujaaz radio broadcast. This free airtime is given because of the brand recognition of Shujaaz and the fact that the station owners know that the content will be of the highest possible standard means that young people will pester to listen to the short daily broadcasts. The stations believe that this impetus will help them to keep the listeners for the evening.

It is highly beneficial to **work with trusted local partners** who understand the environment, the language, what work has been carried out in the past (good and bad), and the social norms. The right local partners are key because:

- They will build trust easily and quickly
- They can facilitate interactions with the appropriate farming household members, which further reinforces trust and ensures a reality check in all stages of the planning and development of the campaign
- The interactions with farming household members can identify any impediments to technology uptake and support critical adjustments to the approach or the materials
- There tends to be faster diffusion/acceptance of technologies and a willingness to try out suggested technologies as a result of trust built
- They are aware of what has or hasn't worked previously and can facilitate the partnership's learning from this investment

Partners should be recruited, and work programs allocated, based on **the value they add**. It is important to choose partners who have a track record capable of providing a meaningful contribution toward realising goals. It is also useful to agree which personnel from partner organisations will take on specific roles so that the partnership has access to some of the key knowledge and experience vested within the partner organisations. The partners need to be encouraged to take ownership of the milestones in the project.

**Investors need to identify whether partners are up-to-date with current technological innovations** and whether they have the strategic ability to engage with these innovations. It is worth noting however, depending on the nature of the audience, not all current innovations will be applicable and require investment.

Partners need to **agree that the agricultural technologies** to be promoted are appropriate [see section 2, above, for more information]. Furthermore, **for a campaign to be successful, materials and approaches need to be delivered with a high level of consistency** – even though this may involve some compromise.

A suggested approach is to **agree and sign off a detailed technical brief** covering all aspects of the technology from planning and land preparation, through the planting and growing stage to harvest and post-harvest storage and value additions. This brief is then the guide from which all partners produce all their campaign messages. The process of developing the technical brief can be fascinating, as different perceptions and approaches are shared. It can also help the partners to become more consistent within their organisations.

**The technical brief does not have to be prescriptive, and can result in various options being offered to farmers** - for example use of pesticides, bio-control and farmer-led innovations may all be recommended. Partners need some flexibility in how new/alternative technological approaches are offered to farmers and farmers should be actively involved in how to select the right technology for them with some **simple decision support tools**.

## Partner roles

In acknowledging the skills and knowledge different partners bring into a partnership, it should be clear that **there are various types of partners who play different roles**:

- **Knowledge partners** – these partners have generated scientific content and can provide agricultural technologies ready for upscaling. They mainly consist of research organisations but can include the private sector. A key role can include validation of materials and approaches developed by the partners
- **Delivery partners** – these partners provide dissemination channels for diffusion of communication materials and promoting technologies
- **Value-chain partners** –these partners facilitate supply of inputs to clients and sustain supply chains (inputs could include chemicals, seed, equipment or access to finance) or they facilitate off-taking of products from farmers
- **Policy-related partners** –these partners are informed about the policy environment and create a conducive atmosphere for the project to efficiently disseminate technologies to achieve impact. Sometimes they can also feed project findings into the policy making environment through their knowledge and connections
- **Learning partners** – these partners embed learning from the campaign into a learning or training and development environment to ensure that the approaches can be replicated or adapted to new communication challenges. They can be responsible for training in extension or curriculum design within education settings
- **Mandate holders** – these partners (in addition to many of the functional skill areas above) have a government designated position within the supply chain of information. They act as a quality guarantors

**Case notes:** A number of CABI projects have involved government researchers in implementation activities; this is crucial in giving credibility to the campaign's efforts. Government researchers act as guarantors by signing off technologies, thus ensuring information disseminated is scientifically sound.

Additionally, they are gatekeepers ensuring technologies reaching farmers are accurate, site-specific and in line with government policies. In the area of SMS and voice telecoms messages they also help the telecoms companies safeguard themselves from litigation for giving out poor advice.

It is important to test assumptions about the roles partners will play. For example, it is often assumed that government channels will distribute information for free. In reality it is wise to **budget for government agencies to work on at least a cost recovery basis**, this includes all extension staff and research stations teams and often government-owned radio station staff. Sometimes government information, such as meteorological forecasts are also working towards income targets, and expect to sell information to provide income streams.

**It is important to identify and utilize appropriate skills and knowledge** within the partnership. Whilst some organisations carry a key gatekeeper role, it is important to look at the skill and resources (capacity and capability) in the partnership and assess if any **capacity building is needed** to make delivery of the campaign objectives achievable.

## **Section 5: What affects choice of channel and format? How to choose the most appropriate communication channel and format**



**Summary of section 5: How a socially engaged investor should think about communication format and channels.** There are a number of key factors to consider And it is important to understand their impact. Clarifying the objectives for the campaign and the wider program of work is an essential first step.

### **What is the difference between channels and format?**

A channel is the medium used to deliver the message - for example using interpersonal communication to introduce demonstration plots, or mass media such as radio. The format is the form the message takes for example there are several different formats that could be used when delivering messages through radio - phone-ins, drama, or a magazine program which uses a mix of different formats. Some formats offer greater opportunity for participation and the introduction of feedback loops than others.

A campaign based approach is where one or more channels and formats are developed simultaneously in the same geographic area.

**Integration of more than one channel or format** may lead to:

- **opportunities to reinforce messages** using the specific qualities of different media to inspire audiences or capture specific detail
- **opportunities for cross promotion** campaigns, for example using SMS to remind farmers to listen to a radio program, or using radio to encourage SMS sign-up. Where different channels are produced by different partners, careful planning is required to make this possible
- **opportunities to access different members of the farming household** – some media channels and format may be more likely to reach (or less likely to exclude) specific age groups or women farmers for example



### **Action-orientated checklist: Choosing channels and formats**

1. Is there a clear rationale for the communication for development campaign?
2. Are the higher-level objectives clear?
  - a. Raising awareness of an agricultural technology
  - b. Increasing knowledge of an agricultural technology
  - c. Changing attitude to an agricultural technology
  - d. Encouraging trialing of an agricultural technology
  - e. Encouraging adoption of an agricultural technology
3. Is the timing of the campaign suitably aligned to the agricultural calendar?
4. Is the planning and delivery timeframe realistic?
5. Is there a clear plan for evidence of research into the campaign approach?
6. Does the research support the selection of different channels that are gender equitable?
7. Is there a clear plan for evidence of research into the media preferences of the target audience?
8. Do the channels and formats selected appropriately support the complexity of the technology being shared? For example, more complex technologies lend themselves to more visually based approaches.
9. Is there a clear plan for evidence of research into the media options in the locality? Does this also explore access to working radios, attendance at meetings and training event by gender etc.?
10. Have language and literacy issues been explored?
11. Are the social norms and customs understood and have they been considered?
12. Does the fit between the objectives, target audience and chosen media make sense? For example, are the formats sufficiently nuanced to meet the needs of different gender groups?
13. Is there a distribution/ dissemination plan in place that has a strong chance of getting the media to the audience?
14. Is there a clear understanding of the likely reach of the campaign (not the potential reach)?
15. Is there a clear budget for the campaign and does it show a realistic model of how the investment could deliver the message at the required scale to a target audience?

### **Key issues to inform investment decisions**

As part of the process of choosing media channels, investors should consider:

It is important to **clarify the objectives of the campaign and the program**, put simply, what you want to achieve. In doing this it is also important to consider how you measure impact of the investment (see section 6 on monitoring learning and evaluation).

Objectives may include:

- Raising awareness of an agricultural technology
- Increasing knowledge of an agricultural technology
- Changing attitude to an agricultural technology
- Encouraging trialing of an agricultural technology
- Encouraging adoption of an agricultural technology

Any of the objectives above might be combined with objectives to test proto-types and pilot materials/channels/formats/messages or move to a mainstream campaign.

## Getting started

### **Investors need to allow time for research and development of a campaign.**

Communication for development approaches require community level participatory activity to test and shape the messages and materials, and desk research may need to be carried out. Context is important. It is important to understand if a channel is trusted. Data gathering and audience pre-research will lead to better decision making, provided the right people are asked!

Channel selection can be influenced by the **timeframe for project implementation**. Some communications challenges require long-term investment to have the desired level of impact. For example, some experts have predicted that it will take 15 years for inoculant to be mainstreamed by small-scale farming households. Over time the channel and format may change and investment will probably move from public investors (creating awareness) to private sector investors (building brand loyalty).

**Seasonality/timing of the investment:** It is essential to bring the right message at the right time. The timing of agricultural messages is dictated by the farming calendar and weather conditions. For example, one of the SILT radio campaigns had to be extended to allow for the meteorological office rain forecasts. Planting eventually took place 6 weeks later and message were changed to include climate smart information like switching to short duration crops. Also bear in mind that some media channels and formats have longer lead-times, using film for example may require working well ahead of the season the film will be disseminated in. Late investment then can mean that work (or impact) is pushed back a season – which can be a year. Socially engaged investors wishing to work in the agricultural sector may need to streamline their decision-making processes.

It is important to consider the **budget or planned level of investment** for the communication approach, and to be clear about the expected level of return on investment. This may be measured in financial terms but the return may also take into consideration the social and ecological impact.

There are also fixed and variable costs to be taken into consideration. The cost of developing and producing materials is usually higher for film and radio than print. In some cases, the artwork or media can be reused/repurposed in subsequent years, greatly reducing the costs of future campaigns.

Good mass media can reach farmers at a very low cost, but it is often assumed that these approaches are less likely to result in adoption of new technologies. By contrast interpersonal approaches such as farmer-field schools, and field training days are thought to be more likely to result in adoption. There is however now strong evidence to back up these assumptions.

Mass media can play a strong role in building awareness but as farmers move through towards testing or adapting the technology they may need more interpersonal approaches such as extension, farmers field schools, demo plot training or film screenings with question and answer sessions.

**Factor in time for change along the campaign due to the complexity of the technology/ message(s):** The media channel or format may need to be changed to support more complex messages/ technologies or the stage of the campaign. Building awareness of a product like inoculant is very different from getting farmers to apply the product following the manufacturer's instructions. Some messages may work better if more than one channel or format is used. Complex messages or messages on complex technologies may need to be broken down into manageable chunks – or a channel selected that can embrace

complexity. For example, a radio series can be 8 hours total broadcast over 16 weeks, but not all farmers may hear all the programs. Detailed print instructions help to reinforce complex messages – but distribution can be complex and expensive.

**The reach required by the campaign:** The selection of channel and format will impact on the number of people that can potentially be reached (see section 6 on reach). Interpersonal approaches (such as farmer field schools) may reach less people but have a great deal of interaction, while mass media reaches more but can be less interactive. It is important to understand the different approaches to estimating reach:

- **Potential reach** refers to all of the people who can receive the radio message e.g. one million people
- **Potential effective reach** refers to all the adults (i.e. not counting children) in rural areas (based on population density) that are within transmitter distance of the radio stations relay systems e.g. 500,000
- **Reach** is the number of people listening to one or more radio programs - this will be influenced by radio ownership, popularity of the radio station/ farmer segment, the competition in terms of other radio stations - e.g. 100,000

How reach information can be collected is explored in the monitoring, learning and evaluation section in Section 7.

#### **FIPS-Africa**

Farm Input Promotions -Africa have been looking at ways to work in communities to de-risk the adoption of new technologies. They provide village-based advisors. The advisors are freelancers that work within a group of settlements to provide a combination of advice and access to paid for agricultural inputs typically seed and planting materials, fertilizer and livestock services such as immunization. They make their income from commission.

There are several important steps that FIPS-Africa take. First the village based advisor is a trusted farmer selected by the community. This means that they are unlikely to try to sell inappropriate technologies to their neighbours. Second all technologies are pre-screened for suitability for the specific agro-ecological zone and context where the advisor is located. Third when they are trying to encourage the adoption of new varieties they offer small seed packs for an on farm experimentation – so farmers can judge if the variety has advantages (such as resistance to a pest or disease) but also has the required taste or marketability.

FIPS-Africa also encourages its suppliers to provide small pack sizes so that the farmers can start to invest in new technologies and build up their investment over time as their income rises.

#### **Know your audience**

It is key to clarify who will be the **target audience** for the message and then decide on the most suitable channels and formats to use. In order to make most impact consider if it is possible to segment the target audience, and will this impact on the way that the messages are nuanced for that specific niche group of farmers?

For example, the Legume Alliance campaigns in Tanzania targeted young farmers with common bean information rather than soybean information. Soybean is harder to grow and much harder to market and so it was not considered to be an entry level crop. The Legume Alliance combined different channels and formats such as comics and youth radio to access younger farmers.

There are different ways to segment the audience. One of the most important of these is based on ability to invest in emerging technologies. Innovation is adapted at different speeds by different groups. Poorer farmers are less able to take risks and so strategies need to put in place to de-risk investment.

Understanding ability to pay is a critical way of organising information for farmers. Too often farmers are presented with information on the optimum fertilizer rate, rather than an approach that starts from the level of funds farmers are able to invest.

#### **OFRA**

The Optimising Fertilizer Recommendations for Africa project collected from new field trails and legacy data from similar research. This data was used to develop practical decision support tools including fertiliser optimisation tools. The fertilizer optimisation tools provide advice on how much fertiliser a farmer should use to maximise their profits, tailored to their individual situations. The individual situations are a combination of the farming objectives and the ability to pay for fertilizer and others apply other soil fertility measures such as the application of manure or growing legumes as an intercrop.

**Fitting the channel to the target audience requires careful research and prototype and pilot testing where possible.**

It is key to **involve target audience in development and testing of message** material, channel and format (e.g. to test use of language) and repeat at the implementation stage.

**Review and consider gender and social norms** as this may affect not only channel or format choice but can also impact on the timing of delivery, location of delivery (especially for events) or even the content. For example, Farm Radio International runs the 'Her Voice on Air' project giving women access and voice on the radio through WhatsApp. In some cases, the content supports existing gender norms - for example women are likely to be more receptive to advice on nutrition and many post-harvest value additions. In other cases, gender norms may be challenged through the choice of photographs or illustrations which may show farmers working in ways that challenge gender stereotypes.

Radio listening clubs can be established to provide access to radio programs to under-represented groups such as women and children or to encourage families to listen to the radio together. However, it is hard to get to scale with these bespoke intervention. Radio listening clubs typically reach 25 farmers, but they can provide some balance to the mix of audiences reached. For example, the clubs may consist of 4 or 5 families or they may be a women only space. These groups provide excellent opportunities for feedback that can unlock the door to wider access to minority groups in the future.

Different channels or formats may be good at reaching particular demographics, but these may not be based on preferences. Often barriers are placed in the way of younger farmers and women access information such as holding the training a long way from a settlement that makes it impossible for women to attend and complete their essential household duties.

### **Case study: Fitting media channels to different age and gender groups**

Children and young people carry out chores in African farming households but usually hear about new technologies second hand via a parent. When they are informed, they are good at sharing information and their 'pester power' can deliver change in communities.

Curriculum support materials can get trusted information into farming households through young people and SMS or social media can also be a good entry point to reach younger farmers (under 35-year olds). Shujaaz youth media platform uses Sheng a 'youth language' or slang derived from a combination of Kiswahili and English to speak directly to young people.

Women can find it hard to get to demonstration plots because domestic work and child-care often keep them close to home. Equally lack of economic power can mean that women cannot buy batteries for their radios, or easily access mobile phones.

To overcome this GALA/SILT in Ghana ran a number of village-based film screenings which took place after evening meal time when women's evening chores were completed, and children were welcome to attend.

Films on soybean production shown at early evening village-based screenings attracted family audiences. Of the 29,555 attending 23% were men, 31% women and 46% young people (under 18). Approaches such as this can help to overcome some of the barriers to women and young people's participation in an information dissemination approach.

### **Women go 50:50 on division of labour**

A Farm Radio International listening group encourages women to try new approaches and helps them to cross the religious divide to access information on a station that they would not usually listen to.

Pili Athumani is the leader of the women's listening group in Mnung'una village in the Singida Region of Tanzania. She's been tuning into a weekly radio program that is not only benefiting her sorghum harvest but also equalizing the division of labour within her household.

The women tune in to Radio Maria using a smartphone provided as part of the [Her Voice on Air](#) project. Pili and her neighbours enjoy listening as a group, and discussing the weekly questions they were given during the training at the beginning of the project. They also enjoy gathering together and sending their messages to the radio station.

Pili says she finds the phone system very easy to use, although she had not used a smartphone before. She sometimes calls the station to ask when their messages will be played and is proud to hear her voice on Radio Maria. "It's my privilege to be heard through Radio Maria. I would not sleep so that I do not miss this chance."

The group's husbands were not initially supportive of their wives listening to Radio Maria, as it is a Catholic station and their community is predominantly Muslim. But the women persisted and the men eventually came to see the benefit of the radio program and now support their wives' participation.

These days Pili's husband encourages her to listen to the radio program and reminds her to tune in. Pili says that she and her husband now share the work of the household equally. And she is not alone; in fact, the slogan of her listening group is 50/50.

*Local radio programs, designed with women in mind, can provide women with the information they need to help them increase harvests and incomes. They can also share the voices of women with thousands of listeners. With the support of International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Farm Radio International is providing hundreds of women in Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Malawi with the skills and confidence to tell their own story on the radio, their way, as part of the [Her Voice on Air](#) project.*

**Consider audience literacy levels and language choice** in order to ensure the best channel and format fit. Generally speaking, literacy levels are lowest amongst older women in rural areas. Where literacy levels are low it is important to understand how to work around this – for example replacing SMS with voice messages.

When it comes to diagrams and illustrations audiences may have low levels of visual literacy and/or may bring their own cultural interpretation to bear on how they interpret graphics.

In terms of language choice be prepared to use several languages across different channels and formats. For example, the authors found that the community in Kapchorwa, Uganda wanted radio messages in the local language, but SMS in English. In Northern Ghana print materials were produced in English but film narrative was in Dagbani and Gonja.

#### **What channels already exist/are in use and distribution issues**

In each location, it is important to **explore the landscape of existing media channel** and formats available. This requires a detailed knowledge of the media options, but it is important to test the channel availability and accessibility. Here are some questions to consider to get to the level of detail required for a successful campaign:

- How widespread is radio ownership and who has radio batteries?
- Where does radio signal reach?
- Who has internet connection?
- Which mobile phone networks are used by farmers?
- Who has mobile phone/credit?
- Are farmer's groups active in the location?
- Where are the agro-dealers located?
- How active is the extension service?

**Distribution:** It is relatively easy to develop fit for purpose materials in a variety of media. However, for most media, a third-party channel operator is essential to access **effective distribution**. The distribution will in part dictate the format. Films can be disseminated via village-based screenings, mobile phones, or television. The audio from the film can be repurposed into radio, but all of these factors impact on the design of the brief. For example, the Shujaaz comic has two major distribution routes – one as an insert into a sports newspaper “Mwanaspoti” and second by being put on the counter at Coca-Cola kiosks across Tanzania (see notes above on gender considerations and distribution).

**Remember the media landscape changes over time as do audience preferences – so don't assume what worked well in the past will automatically work in a new setting.**

**Integration of more than one channel or format** may lead to:

**Opportunities to reinforce messages** using the specific qualities of different media to inspire audiences or capture specific detail. This means that more than one media may be targeted to a particular audience. Different channels and formats can result in different members of the farming household being targeted with the same technology, but nuanced messages in a media that is most likely to reach different groups (young, old, male, female etc.)

<p><b>What is the objective of the campaign?</b></p>	<p><b>Awareness campaign</b> may need to inspire - so a visual channel may be enough. This needs to focus on the benefits and the impact of the technology rather than all of the technical detail.</p> <p><b>Media selection:</b> Radio spots, billboards, posters and television will all raise awareness</p>	<p><b>Behaviour change</b> campaigns need inspiration but reinforcement of the details of the technology is also important. Without clear reinforcement, the quality of the adoption or trialing may not be very close to the original message.</p> <p><b>Media selection:</b> Farmer field schools, demonstration plots, radio listening clubs, village-based screenings, farm-based trials, participatory radio</p>
<p><b>What opportunities exist for complementary media and how will distribution work?</b></p>	<p>Complementary media aims to build up persuasive information targeted at one individual. Ideally the distribution plan will support the dissemination to the media at the same time. This will mean print being given out at different events like extension training sessions or village-based film screenings.</p> <p>Depending on the combinations different formats may be appropriate. Visual elements are important in print communications - but they become more important to support radio, or extension campaigns than say a film or demonstration plot. There is more of a challenge getting complementary information to support radio, TV or SMS campaign.</p>	
<p><b>Opportunities to access different members of the farming household</b> – some media channels and formats may be more likely to reach (or less likely to exclude) specific age groups or men, rather than women farmers.</p>	<p>When mass media is part of the mix it may be appropriate to look at targeting different members of the farming household. In many places women farmers have group meetings and cooperatives. Approaches can be set up to target women through these groups such as radio listening clubs for example, to overcome the bias in men's access to, and control of, radio. Interactive radio elements and SMS based information campaigns reach young farmers and more men than women. Increasingly media opportunities exist to reach young people. In Tanzania these include Shujaaz (comic and social</p>	

	media platform) and Femina Hip (magazine).
<b>Opportunities for cross promotion</b> campaigns for example using SMS to remind farmers to listen to a radio program – or using radio to encourage SMS sign-up. Where different channels are produced by different partners, careful planning is required to make this possible	Well planned campaigns can help signal to audiences the variety of media on offer. This approach can also encourage conversation in the household.

### Useful references

Dayo Phillip, Olumuyiwa O Jayeoba, Yarama Ndirpaya, Gabriel Malomo and Edet Ekong (2018) **Scaling strategies for agricultural innovations in Nigeria**. FARA Research Results Vol 2(1) PP 21. Contact: Professor Dayo Phili [dayophillip@gmail.com](mailto:dayophillip@gmail.com)  
[http://faraafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/FRR-Volume-2-No-1\\_2018.pdf](http://faraafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/FRR-Volume-2-No-1_2018.pdf)



## **Section 6:** **Channel and format: design and distribution**



In each context, communication teams will need to make an assessment of how to engage a target audience at the scale required by the investors. This will vary considerably both between and within countries, between gender/age groups and between cash and subsistence crops amongst many more considerations.

As well as considering the best choice of channels and formats that can be accessed, it is also key to determine what is already available in terms of distribution mechanisms. Few investors can develop a new distribution mechanism, so it is important to understand what is in place, how it works and the extent to which those responsible for would be willing, or able, to cooperate in a new campaign. This requires planning and clarity about the roles that each partner should play.

### **Checklist**

- 1 Does the campaign plan involve government and/ or private extension in an appropriate way?
- 2 If inputs are involved in the technology, how does the campaign work to enhance the private sector agro-dealer supply chains?
- 3 Does the campaign plan show an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the different elements of the broadcast media sector?
- 4 In developing the campaign materials have subject experts been consulted?
- 5 Are communities involved in the co-creation of the campaign materials?
- 6 In developing the campaign materials have proto-types been tested and materials piloted with proactive approaches to collecting feedback/ comments?
- 7 Is the science good?
- 8 Is the material produced in a language and format that is farmer-friendly? (See wider considerations in Section 5).
- 9 Are graphics used to show 'how to' and 'with and without' scenarios?
- 10 Are positive role models (other farmers featured)?
- 11 Do the images show farmers that the target audience will associate with? (See wider considerations in Section 5)

## **Short summaries: distribution partners and channels**

### **Government – extension**

Government extension services will primarily be involved in communication as part of delivering a public good. That is communication work is being undertaken in conjunction with farmers in the anticipation that farmers will/ may increase productivity, improve food security, reduce poverty, improve quality of life for citizens and spur economic growth for the country.

Extension services work to deliver a broad range of government agendas within agriculture, but often lack the resources they need to work effectively with farmers at scale. This means that many services have become very pragmatic project partners, using these funds to help them deliver their core agendas.

### **NGOs and social enterprises – extension**

NGOs and social enterprises involved in extension will often straddle a niche between delivering public good and contributing to wider development goals, such as the Sustainable Development Goals. For this group, communication outputs must demonstrate measurable progress towards medium-term targets such as adoption of technologies, and changes in decision making by farmers. Very often projects will be time-bound, tied to funding and requiring adherence to certain milestones.

### **Private sector – agro-dealers and agri-businesses**

Private sector involvement in communication for development may also serve a dual function of businesses demonstrating an aspect of public good through corporate social responsibility, as well as driving the business growth potential for their products. The second option is often the driving case for the private sector making an investment in behavior change related communication campaigns.

Raising awareness of a new technology often requires too much long term investment to justify private sector investment. However, raising awareness of a new technology is often seen as public good. What often happens is that the private sector will target their investment in brand awareness once the public campaign has created latent or effective demand.

### **Broadcast media**

In many countries and regions radio is highly fragmented and broadcasting takes place in a wide variety of local languages. Ethiopia is an exception where the national radio stations dominate. Television options are increasing, however television ownership in farming household lags behind radio ownership. In some places agricultural information is disseminated on DVD from hire shops which rent out or sell feature films and music videos.

### **Scaling-up**

Scaling up within the development context has often been defined as a process that increases the reach, depth, breadth, scope and sustainability of the actionable solution for the end users and as a process that can take an intangible concept into tangible useful and adopted products. This is often differentiated from processes that seek to achieve impact at scale. While there will be varied interpretations out there, a number of actors have begun to reflect on the notion of scaling up as consisting of 5 key components:

A good solution has:

- Been based on a good opportunity
- The right business model
- The right partners
- The right timing
- Leadership appropriate to the context

For socially engaged investors, a nuanced reading of the 'business model' is necessary in order to place the concept in a wider development context.

Scaling-up is sometimes used to refer specifically to taking existing and proven models into a policy arena as the basis for moving to scale.

### **Scaling-out**

As alluded to above, scaling out is likely to focus more on seeking to achieve impact at scale. While they might be easily used interchangeably, scaling-up and scaling-out are thought to be distinct processes that can lend to different ways of measuring.

### **Good practice in the design process for all channels and formats**

The movement of travel for good communication design is increasingly towards innovative approaches to co-creation of materials in a collaboration between end-user communities, technical experts and media professionals.

There is a continuum of intervention from no end-user engagement to full engagement of farming communities:

Designed by experts based on what they perceive communities need and then disseminated	Tested on communities at key stages – such as prototypes and pilot testing	Communications co-created with communities – workshops identify needs and prioritised challenges facing a community and they work with experts to create the final product.	Research of agricultural innovation based on needs derived from a community that stays engaged and helps to create cultural sensitive, nuanced information to share the innovation within the community
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This guide is aimed at moving investors away from this no end-user engagement ('solutions' foisted upon communities) and driving forward more communication for development aspects of design (communities identify their own problems, active agents, active voices working alongside 'experts') to ensure engagement and sustainability

Leadership of a co-creation process requires a sensitive approach to work with groups to find the truth about what they want and need. Different segments of the farming community may have their own ideas around solutions, so it is valuable to use a facilitation process to explore first the problems and challenges and then explore a range of potential solutions.

### **How farmers innovate with information**

Years of work undertaken in research stations has shown that the best planting solution for soybean is 1 seed per hole every 5 cm. Marginally less productive is a planting distance of 2 seeds per hole every 10 cm – but this does reduce the effective canopy which reduces the need to weed.

A farmers' solution to create a 5cm planting distance was to create a furrow and place seeds every 5 cm.

Agro-dealers have now challenged GALA to provide recommendations for farmers planting 20 acres – they currently broadcast seed but want to find a way to incorporate inoculation into their planting practices. Product innovations are exploring liquid inoculant that can be applied directly to the soil.

Farmers and researchers are working together to find viable ways of making workloads manageable and technologies scalable.

A co-creation process requires robust testing and checking to ensure it is delivering what is needed and that the information meets efficacy tests. As explored in Section 5, recruitment of the right farming-community representatives in this process is critical and should represent the diverse needs of farmers.

Whatever process is undertaken to create material on agricultural innovations, it is essential that communication channels and formats are tested.

Good materials in any channel or format should:

- Be based on **good science, proven to be ready for farmers to implement** (see Section 2) but they should also **be open to including farmer-led innovations** that work.
- **Be farmer-friendly** – no jargon; explanations in terms farmers use, in an appropriate language (remember the appropriate written and spoken languages may be different as discussed in Section 5).
- Have/ consider **the use of simple illustrations which can make ideas easier to understand on visual channels and formats like posters, leaflets or films as** they are good for step-by-step approaches.
- **Show the implications of different investment strategies** – for example with and without a technology.
- **Show positive and appropriate role models** to create a greater connection between the audience and the idea being shared. For this reason, films, photos and audio formats are best developed in the target region. However, it does seem that people are more forgiving of illustrations from outside the region, and will accept them provided they see some shared points of reference. Shujaaz illustrations travelled from Kenya to Tanzania without significant changes to the drawings of the characters.

- **Propose clear messages communicating the benefits of a technology in terms that make sense to individual farmers** and that offer some form of efficiency and increased effectiveness against clearly defined outcomes – e.g. increase yield for better food security/ nutritional security or more profit/ more efficient land use. It is essential that these are framed in ways that offer solutions to farmers' challenges and aspirations for improved livelihoods as appealing to people to respond to the national interests rarely succeeds.

**Working together for maximum outputs:** When organisations work in isolation they tend to have to make tough choices and often have to opt for a limited number of communication options. However, if socially engaged investors can be encouraged to work together it can:

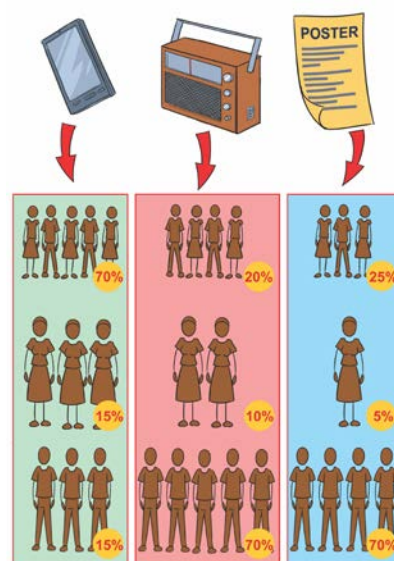
- Avoid a duplication of effort
- Allow a broader range of media to be used
- Allow for a mix of media that is likely to target different household members with nuanced information specific to the learning needs and established media usage
- The campaign approach can also create a buzz that helps to reinforce messages and push people between different media channels – so the radio station may follow the demo plot and the demo plot may have a poster promoting the radio station – we call these 'handshakes' between different channels

Channels: Media	Formats/approaches
<p><b>Radio</b></p> <p>Radio is often seen as a useful <b>mass-media approach</b> for getting information out to large numbers of farmers. In rural areas ownership of radios can be as high as 90% of households. However, the increasingly multi-channel environment can make it hard to achieve high penetration rates.</p> <p>Radio campaigns usually run for a number of weeks – giving time for a lot of detailed content to be shared. Good radio content producers can create content that reflects the experiences and information needs of different farmer groups (women, men, youth etc.)</p> <p>Radio can be very good at sharing <b>dynamic information</b> – such as market prices, weather forecasts and pest and disease alerts. It is also able to present seasonally relevant nuanced information.</p> <p>Radio stations can usually accommodate specific needs for information dissemination to be timed to coincide with the farming calendar.</p>	<p>Participatory or interactive radio can be a good way of crowd sourcing material and/or creating an on-going dialogue with farming communities. In this process it is relatively easy to create some level of gender balance, for example, in the voices, views and life experiences are shared.</p> <p>Radio formats are often made up of magazine formats – which can include a range of elements :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• panel discussions</li> <li>• a town hall meeting – a large meeting at a location with active audience Q&amp;A</li> <li>• interviews</li> <li>• scripted monologues</li> <li>• shared diary piece/ reflection</li> <li>• phone-in/text-in shows</li> <li>• mini-drama and sketches</li> <li>• jingles and message songs</li> <li>• vox pop (or village voices)</li> <li>• quizzes and competitions</li> </ul> <p>Other formats are: radio spots / adverts/ promos</p>
<p><b>Mobile phones</b></p> <p>This channel is good at sharing dynamic information for example - to reflect climate challenges or pest and disease challenges.</p>	<p>Short messages (SMS) can be developed and packaged to arrive at the farmer's mobile phone at the most suitable time – just ahead of the farming calendar.</p>

Channels: Media	Formats/approaches
<p>However, there are challenges for farmers about the number of sms and messages they can store on their phones.</p>	<p>However, short messages are limited in the size. This requires particular care in shaping messages that are clear and understandable.</p> <p>Voice telephony (outward dialed voice calls) has a much greater opportunity for gender balance in terms of voices and nuanced content.</p>
<p><b>Print</b></p> <p>Print is one of the most versatile formats, however it can be challenging to get distribution organised.</p> <p>The quality of the graphic design and the ordering of the information is critical to the success of the material developed. Simplicity is key.</p>	<p>There are a number of different print formats - in addition to the usual formats like posters, leaflets and banners, there are more imaginative resources like comics/ magazines, and point of sale for use in agro-dealerships.</p> <p>The intended use of the print format dictates the amount of detail that can be included. Print does give great opportunities to represent different farmer groups using carefully selected visual imagery.</p>
<p><b>Social media</b></p> <p>Increased ownership of smart phones across Africa is making social media more accessible.</p> <p>Currently social media usage is largely associated with a younger demographic (farmers under 35) as the direct recipients of information – but more work is needed to understand how information is shared within the off-line community.</p>	<p>In Africa this especially includes Facebook and WhatsApp which can help create communities of interest and service them with information - but it is an effective source of two-way communication. Social media can be used to crowd source views and information to inform the development of a campaign.</p>
<p><b>Film</b></p>	<p>There are a number of different ways that dissemination of films can be designed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• village-based screenings are now relatively cheap to organise (bikes with trailers fitted out for the ASHC GALA project in Ghana cost around \$2,500 to build and equip)</li> <li>• films can be shown on television (but may not get into rural areas where television ownership will be lower)</li> <li>• shared via Bluetooth or rented out by the DVD booths springing up in rural areas as televisions with DVD players become more common</li> </ul> <p>In Nigeria, Notore Chemical Industries paid sports bars owners to show their promotional films as part of their dissemination plan.</p> <p>The gender and age dynamics for film are interesting. Blue toothed content can be shared by smart-phone owners who tend to be younger. Village-based film screenings can be timed to be shown after the evening meal and the chores have been completed meaning women could bring their children to the screenings and have access to the information being shared.</p>

Channels: Interpersonal approaches	<p><b>Formats/ approaches</b></p> <p>The following all offer a great opportunity to collect data from the participating farmers that can in turn inform the development of future materials and approaches.</p> <p>The location, the way these channels are set up and how information about the opportunity is shared can have a big impact on the age and gender balance of the people taking part.</p>
Demonstration plots and training days	<p>Demonstration plots are often cited by farmers as a preferred way of getting information and learning. This approach needs the active participation of whoever is responsible for supervising the plot as it is really important they understand the technologies being shared.</p> <p>Demonstration plots and learning can be set up as participatory processes involving scientists, researchers and farmers – or with one farmer undertaking the work on the plot.</p> <p>The design, location, facilitation and channels used for sharing invitations will all impact on the ability of women and younger farmers to be included in the training.</p>
Farmer field schools	<p>Farmer field schools is a group-based process based on discovery learning to explore good agricultural practices in the field during weekly meetings over the course of a season.</p>
Radio listening clubs	<p>Radio listening clubs bring together targeted groups to listen to radio content either live or pre-recorded.</p> <p>These clubs are often set up to ensure inclusivity in the campaign, so they may explicitly target women, young farmers or family groups.</p>
Go-see visits	<p>Structured farm visits to explore a new technology or approach.</p>
Clinics, events and rallies	<p>Clinics, events and rallies bring together groups of people to meet experts, see exhibits or demonstrations.</p>

# Section 7: Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation



## Summary of Section 7

Monitoring, evaluation and learning is essential to learn lessons for future projects/programs, demonstrate good management, assess results, and provide accountability.

Communication for development approaches aim to bring about behaviour change, as well as social change. However, evaluating these approaches is not clear-cut as both behaviour change and social change is often fluid, takes place over a long period of time and sometimes initially intangible making it hard to measure.

Conscious effort is required then to address the monitoring, evaluation and learning challenges, which must be embedded in project/programme delivery as opposed to being stand-alone or mere add-ons.

Monitoring helps to validate that the program did what it set out to do, impact evaluation helps to establish if the program made a difference and learning (the process of drawing lessons) helps to establish if this was the right thing to do.

## Action-orientated checklist on monitoring, learning and evaluation

1. Does the monitoring and evaluation plan recognize that mainstreaming new technology may require medium to long-term investment?
2. Does the monitoring and evaluation plan include appropriate indicators reflecting the nature of communication for development interventions?
3. Does the overall plan recognize that effective monitoring and evaluation means influencing the way in which communication for development interventions are implemented?
4. Does the monitoring and evaluation plan allow for collecting information on the difference between multi-media reaching one family member and multiple media reaching different family members?
5. Does the monitoring and evaluation plan collect information on how the farmers



engage with the material?

6. Does the monitoring and evaluation plan collect information from the feedback loops built into the campaign to collect feedback from farmers?
7. Does the monitoring and evaluation plan collect information on whether change takes place or not? And why these changes did or did not happen? [Behaviour and attitudes]
8. Has the monitoring and evaluation plan been influenced by the way in which the communication for development interventions are implemented?
9. Have suitable incentives been built in to the ensure delivery partners collect balanced monitoring, learning and evaluation? [A balanced approach is one where both qualitative and quantitative methods are collected]
10. Are mechanisms in place for delivery teams to monitor assumptions and risks?
11. Are there investors' realistic assumptions and expectations about what data can and will be collected?
12. Has a realistic budget been allocated to support the monitoring, learning and evaluation?

## **Before you start**

### **Why is monitoring, learning and evaluation necessary?**

Good monitoring, learning and evaluation allows us to address the following questions:

- Are we are doing what we said we would do? [Internal validity]
- Are we making any difference? [Outcome/impact evaluation]
- Are these the right things to do? [Strategic relevance, testing the model]

Besides understanding the progress of interventions and results achieved, monitoring, learning and evaluation is also important for accountability.

### **Communication for Development approaches and monitoring, learning and evaluation**

The contribution of communication for development in agriculture can be to contribute to increasing food and income security. This is premised on the assumption that, access to information contributes to the learning process, and influences positive change in farming practices or application of technologies, positively impacting on yield (Figure 1).

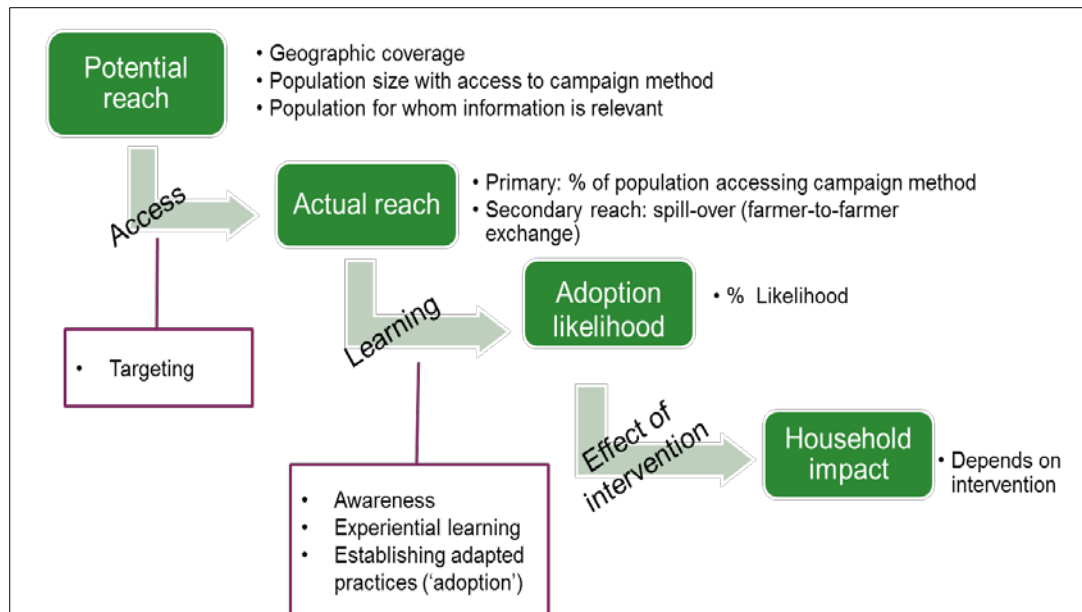
Farmer learning can be described along four key processes;

- awareness
- knowledge acquisition and retention,
- knowledge use and adaptation
- knowledge sharing

These processes are not necessarily sequential since farmers may learn as they try out some innovations for example.

When designing monitoring, learning and evaluation approaches for communication for development, it is important to understand the learning process, and how the target audience can easily be verified at each step.

Depending on the nature of the communication, target audience (potential reach) may not necessarily equal actual program reach. Similarly, not all who are reached progress to trialing or adoption, or ultimately show indicators of change at household level. Monitoring, learning and evaluation tools should therefore be developed to clearly to track audiences as well as demonstrate any change at household, community or aggregate levels.



**Figure 1:** Monitoring, learning and evaluation requirements along the development communication intervention logic

### Practical difficulties in monitoring, learning and evaluation of Communication for Development:

- It is not always clear the extent to which communication for development programmes - rather than political, social or economic factors - have been responsible for change. Similarly, in an environment of multiple players, attributing a change in behaviour or attitude to a specific communication for development intervention is extremely difficult.
- It is often very difficult to define a specific target audience for initiatives that have an effect over a wide area. For example: radio and TV broadcast campaigns, newspaper articles/inserts, or distribution vans.
- Behaviour change and social change is often not a short-term, quantitative linear process so it can be hard to measure impact over a short period. For example, mainstreaming new technologies takes place gradually as farmers move through stages of awareness, interest, experiential learning and establishment of adapted practices and routines.
- There are often many influences and interventions targeting the same behaviour change and attributing change to a particular intervention can be complex. It can be hard for individuals to understand how different factors came together to influence them.

### Planning and budgeting for monitoring, learning and evaluation

It is crucial to build in monitoring, learning and evaluation design from the outset of the communication campaign.

Good design will include the integration of feedback loops within channels to ensure farming communities play an active role throughout the campaign. For example, Farm Radio International works with its partner radio stations to integrate radio call-outs and opinion polls (crowd-sourcing information) and other feedback mechanisms into the radio campaign package.

Feedback may focus on the practicality of content, on clarity of messaging or relate to farmer information needs. Crowd sourcing however, may lead to a bias towards particular gender groups – for example the largest group responding to Farm Radio International radio polls is young men. The other challenge with using radio polls for feedback is when voice messages are left (rather than key-pad voting) resulting in large quantities of feedback being generated. Triangulation by others, such as extension officers or agro-dealers, may also be embedded within the wider campaign to provide feedback on the extent and quality of uptake of promoted technologies.

Evaluation research has put forward many methods aimed at attributing change to specific interventions – such as comparing project participants and non- participants both before and after an intervention have been advanced.

However, these approaches use 'scientific' tests to show how effective the different communication approaches have been and this requires interventions to have

baseline data. In reality, many communication for development interventions start without baseline data. So, alternative research methods are sometimes more appropriate.

#### **Embedding feedback loops in communication channels**

SILT launched radio listening groups in the southern highlands of Tanzania. Radio coverage in these areas is minimal. Groups of farmers congregate in one place and listen to pre-recorded radio programs.

Listening groups facilitate farmers to discuss the content presented on radio, validate through their local extension or technical staff and adapt messages based on their context. A feedback mechanism is embedded where farmers have been able to log their concerns to the radio broadcast, or seek help from local extension officers. While the listening groups self-select, gender balance can be built into the recruitment stage and more balanced feedback can be obtained.

### **Indicators**

There is a need to select appropriate indicators reflecting the nature of communication for development in the way it influences behaviour and social change. Therefore, indicators may focus on behaviours of different stakeholders including farmers. Other relevant indicators might include:

- how a particular approach engages an audience;
- how it integrates feedback loops and takes account of feedback from audiences;
- how accessible it is to target audiences and ultimately whether change takes place or not.

Change indicators can be at household level (evidence from households on change) but may also include indicators at a service level: for example, enquiries at an agro-dealers or frontline public/private extension staff, or sales or enquiries about a particular product.

As discussed, behaviour change is a process that sometimes may take years, and so monitoring, learning and evaluation indicators need to be framed along a timeline, with realistic expectations of change in the short term (1 year or 1-2 seasons), medium term (3-6 seasons) and long term (above 6 seasons).

Selected indicators should also reflect farmer knowledge of new practices, and distinguish between farmers' trialling or testing practices on small areas of land against integration into their regular practices season on season (adoption).

### **Data needs**

Monitoring, learning and evaluation methods can be quantitative or qualitative, but a combination of both is preferred. Many people use quantitative methods to define audience characteristics and to analyse statistical findings. Then they add depth and texture using qualitative methods - which answer 'how' and 'why' questions using a section of the target audience.

Qualitative approaches help teams to understand how change happens. Mixed quantitative and qualitative methods are needed that consider both accountability and learning. Investors should therefore incentivise delivery teams to promote balanced monitoring, learning and evaluation approaches. However, it's important that data needs are realistic, and focused on what is useful to contribute to evidence of programme delivery, learning and accountability.

### **Risks and assumptions**

Communication for development initiatives are implemented in changing contexts – political, social, economic, behavioural etc. Investors should encourage delivery teams to monitor assumptions and risks, particularly contextual issues that might affect achievement of results. If assumptions no longer hold true as a result of change in the background context then delivery teams need to be able to innovate to adjust program plans to achieve intended results.

### **Monitoring learning and evaluation budgets**

Opinions differ as to the percentage of project budget that should be dedicated to monitoring, learning and evaluation.

Smaller projects, or those with short time-frames, generally take up a larger part of the budget compared to large and long-term projects. This is also the case with pilot projects, which try to determine how successful a programme, will be if it is rolled out at a later date. Investors need therefore to be realistic about the budget required for monitoring, learning and evaluation.

### **Example: Assumption that agro-dealers were strong infomediaries**

The SILT team set out to test the hypothesis that agro-dealers played a strong infomediary role for farmers, given their proximity and routine interaction with farmers.

As a result, during campaign design, agro-dealer posters were developed to be placed at the point of sale for legume inputs.

During project implementation, agro-dealer/farmer interactions were assessed to better understand their role and potential as infomediaries.

Results showed that farmers' sources of agricultural advice were dominated by fellow farmers. However, farmers were only sharing information on approaches which they had personally experienced. This means that farmer to farmer contact is not an effective way to kick start innovations.

Less than 20% of farmers mentioned agro-dealers as their source of agricultural advice. There is a need for further work to see how this 20% correlate to those farmers actively purchasing inputs.

In cases where they were cited the information received was mainly focused on products which they stocked, as opposed to general agricultural advice.

Observations at points of sale showed minimal interaction of farmers with displayed information materials. Based on this, the programme adjusted material distribution strategy to target farmers organised in groups especially those participating in field days. Although a campaign-based approach continued to use multiple information points to create awareness and reinforcement of messages, key elements were tested and refined as the campaign developed.

Technology is opening up new opportunities for reviewing the impact of a campaign. Drones can now collect images from vast areas which can be useful to show, for example, if early planting has been adopted as advocated in the fall armyworm prevention campaign. Similarly, telephone interviews, use of mobile data collection and social media can be used to collect data instead of traditional paper-based surveys.

## **Understanding the monitoring, learning and evaluation processes**

### **Formative appraisal**

Formative appraisal is carried out before a communication initiative is launched. It is aimed at understanding the target audience, the development challenge, the messages required and the preferred communication channels. The following approaches may be employed:

- **Knowledge Attitude and Practices Survey (KAPS)** – this is based on the assumption that a person's knowledge influences their attitude, which in turn influences their behaviour. It usually involves written, standardised questionnaires that are composed of yes/no questions and is useful for finding out what a target audience already knows and does.
- **Rapid assessment procedures** (or rapid rural appraisal) give insight into a cultural belief system through a continual process of forming questions and generating ideas, based on information collected from a few key local informants. Information gathered helps project implementers make adjustments to their work as the programme develops.
- **Rural communication appraisal** engages rural people in the formation of communication strategies. Involving the target audience in decision-making ensures relevance and ownership by the people involved.
- **Stakeholder engagement** involves technical stakeholder groups to validate messages and content, provide feedback and define roles and responsibilities. This ensures concerted efforts in delivery of development communication and evaluation of initiatives.

### **Process evaluation**

Undertaken during project implementation, process evaluation is aimed at understanding the program delivery, as well as understanding the reach of messages, gathering feedback from recipients and adjusting program delivery where necessary.

The following tools are used:

**Audience research** to obtain data for understanding audience size, distribution and preferences. It is especially useful in message-based, or campaign-type situations.

**Participatory monitoring and evaluation** allows all stakeholders - particularly the target audience - to take part in on-going assessments of a project and respond to findings.

**Partnership review** shows the effectiveness of the partnerships in delivery of the program/activities. It is important to understand if each partner delivered their activities as planned and the complementarities between various partners.

## Outcomes and impacts

Evaluations undertaken at the end of an intervention, or in the years after the intervention is completed, are key for understanding the effects of the program on the target audience. Each communication intervention should be designed with clear outcomes and impacts with clear plans for how they will be tracked. Some of the tools that can be used to evaluate outcomes and impacts include:

- **Experimental impact studies** – comparing project participants and non-participants, sometimes at different points in the project cycle – e.g. before and after, longitudinal or panel.
- **Participatory evaluation** – allowing target audiences to measure a program's success against the parameters they set themselves.
- **Most significant change studies** – drawing meaning from actual events, rather than being based on indicators.
- **Case studies** - in-depth and detailed examination of a subject of study (the case), as well as its related contextual conditions.
- **Community-level assessment** - qualitative research method used to monitor and evaluate projects/programmes based on participatory assessment and direct consultation with those affected by interventions.
- **Social impact analysis** - iterative framework based on detailed social information to identify and analyse the impacts and responses of interventions on people and institutions. The analysis identifies the different groups affected by the intervention, assessing their preferences, priorities and capabilities in relation to the project.
- **Gender analysis** – studies differences in gender roles, activities, needs and opportunities in a given project/programme context.

### Example: Progress towards SILT research aims: an outcome evaluation

An outcome evaluation was undertaken to document the common bean campaign process, and its sufficiency to address SILT project research aims.

The study estimated that the campaigns directly reached an estimated audience of **655,662** (394,023 male and 261,639 female), with a potential combined audience of up to **eight million** (demo plots, radio plus interactive tools, comics, printed materials, agro dealers, extension staff).

Without a solid project baseline, knowledge gains are difficult to estimate with confidence. However, the milestone for uptake has been achieved, with an estimated 128,589 starting to use one or more promoted practices in common bean or soybean.

There is evidence to show that the campaign based approach works - the more sources of information that reach a farming household, the more likely they are to implement new technologies. The tailoring of the information – to attract youth, or women for example, contributes to this. These findings, combined with an improved understanding of the networks and linkages needed for effective national seed supply systems which improve and increase small-scale farming families' access to input and outputs markets, will be the main legacy of this project.

FRI has facilitated the development of an interactive results map to illustrate reach and potential reach based on project data that will be finalized in early 2018 and shared with all consortium partners and other development organizations in our distributions networks. View the latest draft of this map here: <http://bit.ly/FRIresultsSILT>

## Tools

Different tools are applicable based on whether the information being gathered is qualitative or quantitative. Tools are also designed according to indicator of interest, data collection frequency and methods of data collection. It should be noted that data collected at one point in time should be representative and easily generalizable across the target population or audience. Common tools applicable for communication for development related monitoring, evaluation and learning include:

- Questionnaires and surveys
- Observations
- Focus group discussions
- Key informant interviews
- Exit polls
- Activity logs

### Unpacking different definitions of reach

There are three measures of reach which can be developed.

- **Potential reach** – the number of people a radio station has the ability to reach
- **Potential effective reach** – the people within the potential reach that match with your communication objectives e.g. farmers
- **Actual reach** – the number of people from the target audience actually receiving your message

Potential reach	Potential effective reach	Reach
<b>Radio:</b> A radio station's potential reach is dictated by the power and location of their radio masts. This may for example suggest that 1 million people can potentially receive the signal.	<b>Radio:</b> But for agricultural messages Farm Radio International excludes people living in urban and peri-urban settlements and children. This gives a potential effective reach figure. Most African countries collect good demographic data from national surveys and censuses that can support this sort of exercise. Farm Radio uses a population density figure to determine which areas are rural.	<b>Radio:</b> Actual reach is the estimate of the number of people listening to at least one program. It requires a good survey design at a suitable scale to be able to make an estimate of the composition of the total audience.
<b>Demonstration plot:</b> Number of people living within 3 miles of the plot	<b>Demonstration plot:</b> Number of farmers living in 3 miles of the plot	<b>Demonstration plot:</b> Number of farmers attending the demo plot training

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## Section 8: Glossary



**2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** was adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015. The Agenda is a global plan of action for shared peace, prosperity and partnership.

**Agenda 2063** was adopted by the Heads of State and Governments of the African Union (AU) in January 2015. It is a strategic framework and action plan for the socio-economic transformation of the African continent over the next 50 years. It seeks to build on, and accelerate the implementation of past and existing pan-African initiatives for growth and sustainable development.

**Agro-ecological zones** are defined as, 'geographical areas exhibiting similar climatic conditions that determine their ability to support rainfed agriculture. At a regional scale, AEZs are influenced by latitude, elevation, and temperature, as well as seasonality, and rainfall amounts and distribution during the growing season.' (*HarvestChoice, 2010. Agro-ecological Zones of sub-Saharan Africa.* <http://harvestchoice.org/node/8853>.)

**Attributing change** - the process of evaluating which particular aspects of a campaign were successful and what role other external promotional activity or changes may have been at play during the campaign duration.

**Campaign** - an approach that brings together multiple media channels to reinforce messages. Campaign materials can be focused on one household member or be designed to reach a range of different household members in order to stimulate debate about the application of improved agricultural technologies.

**Channel** - one of a range of different media available to share messages (e.g. print, audio/audio visual, interpersonal).

**Climate smart farming** is defined as, 'an approach that helps to guide actions needed to transform and reorient agricultural systems to effectively support development and ensure food security in a changing climate.' (*FAO Climate Smart Agriculture Sourcebook, 2017.* <http://www.fao.org/climate-smart-agriculture-sourcebook/en>)

**Climate uncertainty** - changes wrought by climate change effectively meaning that traditional agricultural certainties are removed. Of specific importance to agriculture are

changes in rainfall and temperature which can affect planting times, yields and crop losses due to the emergence of new pests and diseases.

**Co-create/Co-creation** - producing campaign materials with a high level of input from members of the intended user group.

**Communication for Development (also known as ComDev and Development Communication)** was defined at the World Congress on Communication for Development, 2006 as 'a social process based on dialogue using a broad range of tools and methods. It is about seeking change at different levels including listening, building trust, sharing knowledge and skills, building policies, debating, and learning for sustained and meaningful change.' (*The Rome Consensus, 2006. Communication for Development: A major pillar for development and change. Rome, Italy*) <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTDEVCOMMENG/Resources/RomeConsensus07.pdf>

**Continuum of uptake** refers to the process by which different groups and individuals adopt new practices. The willingness to attempt new practices and take calculated risks is dependent on access to resources to fall back on if an experiment fails.

**Crowd-sourcing** - seeking input from the target audience often by means of social media.

**Dagbani** - a language spoken in Northern Ghana. It was used in the ASHC/GALA village-based screening campaign on soybean growing, referred to in this publication.

**Development communications** are the activities that can deliver the process described as development communication (see Communication for Development).

**Digital divide refers to** inequalities in terms of access to on-line resources caused by illiteracy and a range of socio-economic factors.

**Farmer-led innovations** - ideas that originate from farmers based on traditional practices or experimentation in the field.

**Feedback loops are defined as** 'a common and powerful tool when designing a control system, taking the system output into consideration, which enables the system to adjust its performance to meet a desired output response.' (*Wikibooks 2017, Control Systems/Feedback Loops*) [https://en.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?title=Control\\_Systems/Feedback\\_Loops&oldid=3339935](https://en.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?title=Control_Systems/Feedback_Loops&oldid=3339935)

**Femina Hip** - a civil society multimedia platform in Tanzania that uses a range of channels (such as their Femina Hip magazine) to specifically target young women and men to become 'changemakers' in their communities.

**Format** - the way that media outputs are arranged to achieve different results e.g. print media has a range of different formats such as posters and leaflets; radio formats include magazine programs or documentaries.

**GALA (Gender and the Legume Alliance)** is a project funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) under its Sustainable Agricultural Intensification Research and Learning in Africa (SAIRLA) programme.

**Gender consideration** – taking into account the norms and power structures around gender and ensuring these are included in campaign planning, implementation and evaluation.

**Gonja** - a language spoken in Northern Ghana. It was used in the ASHC/GALA village-based screening campaign on soybean growing, referred to in this publication.

**Good agricultural practices** (GAP) are defined as those practices which, when applied to agriculture, create a sustainable and ecologically safe environment resulting in high quality crops, greater food security, the generating of income through access to markets and improved working conditions for producers and their families. (FAO 2007, *Guidelines. Good Agricultural Practices for Family Agriculture*. [www.fao.org/3/a-a1193e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/a-a1193e.pdf))

**Ground-truthing** - a process designed to strip back to the essential facts of a scenario and ensure that they resonate with the target audience.

**Inoculant** - a substance used for inoculation (in the case of this publication, rhizobia treatment for legumes).

**Integrated multiple-media** - the combination of channels that are brought together as part of a campaign.

**Mainstreaming** - seeking to make a proven or socially desirable approach common place.

**Mandate holders** - agencies or institutions with a role to ensure adherence to policies, principles or processes usually sanctioned by some branch of government.

**Millennium Villages** – an integrated innovative approach to rural development with the aim of meeting the Millennium Development Goals (forerunner of the Sustainable Development Goals) in rural Africa over a 10-year period through community-led development at very low cost.

**Monitoring** - observations that measure progress or quality over time.

**Multiple-media** bringing together two or more different media channels as the basis of an information campaign.

**Mwanaspoti** - a Kiswahili language sports-orientated newspaper sold in Tanzania with a young, largely male, readership.

**Parastatal** - organization or industry that is owned partially or fully by government and has some political authority.

**Peri-urban** – exact definitions of peri-urban vary but in this publication, it is understood as, ‘the landscape interface between town and country, or also as the rural-urban transition zone where urban and rural uses mix and often clash.’ (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peri-urbanisation>)

**Philanthropic investment** – defined as ‘an action rooted in an individual’s or foundation’s generosity and altruistic concern to promote good or improve human quality of life that devotes, uses, or gives money, time, talent, emotional energy, etc., over an extended period of time, to gain social returns defined by a specific objective, purpose or result.’ (Definitions.net website. <http://www.definitions.net/definition/Philanthropic%20Investment>)

**Public good** - defined as, ‘a commodity or service that is provided without profit to all members of a society, either by the government or by a private individual or organization.’ (OUP Oxford Dictionaries website. [https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/public\\_good](https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/public_good))

**Radio spots** - usually public service short messages broadcast on radio stations and repeated over time. They can be pre-recorded or read live in the studio.

**Randomized controlled trials** are a type of scientific (often medical) experiment which aims to reduce bias when testing a new treatment. The people participating in the trial are randomly allocated to either the group receiving the treatment under investigation or to a group receiving standard treatment (or placebo treatment) as the control.

**Scaling-out** is defined as, 'a growth architecture or method that focuses on horizontal growth, or the addition of new resources instead of increasing the capacity of current resources (known as **scaling up**).' (*Techopedia website*. <https://www.techopedia.com/definition/31678/scale-out>)

**Scaling up** - a process that increases the reach, depth, breadth, scope and sustainability of the actionable solution for the end users, and as a process that can take research and convert it into actions and products that support impact at scale.

**Scaling-up Improved Legume Technologies (SILT)** - a project funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Canada, and delivered in a partnership led by CABI, Farm Radio International and the Africa Fertilizer Agribusiness Partnership.

**Shujaaz comic book** – part of the Shujazz multi-media youth communications platform targeted at young people aged between 16-24 offering positive ideas on how to improve their lives. At the time of writing each month they produce ½ million copies in both Kenya and Tanzania.

**Social enterprise** - a revenue-generating business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to deliver profit to shareholders and owners.

**Social norms** – there are various definitions of social norms. However, for the purposes of this publication we use the definition that social norms 'are the rules of behavior that are considered acceptable in a group or society. People who do not follow these norms may be shunned or suffer some kind of consequence. Norms change according to the environment or situation and may change or be modified over time.'  
(<http://examples.yourdictionary.com/social-norm-examples.html>)

**Socially progressive investment** is an investment which is not predicated on maximizing profit but takes a wider view of what a return on investment might encompass - typically this includes social and/or environmental factors too (see triple bottom line approach).

**Soy ni Pesa (Soy is Money)** is a programme developed by the Catholic Relief Service to increase the competitiveness of soybean production and processing in Tanzania.

**Summative evaluation** is used to evaluate participants learning at the conclusion of a project or programme.

**Sustainable Development Goals** are a set of goals to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda. Each goal has specific targets to be achieved over 15 years from 2016 onwards. (*UN Sustainable Development Goals site*. <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>)

**Sustainable intensification** is defined as a way to 'increase food production from existing farmland while minimising pressure on the environment; a response to the challenges of

increasing demand for food from a growing global population, in a world where land, water, energy and other inputs are in short supply, overexploited and used unsustainably. Any efforts to 'intensify' food production must be matched by a concerted focus on making it 'sustainable.' (*Oxford Martin Programme on the Future of Food* website. <http://www.futureoffood.ox.ac.uk/sustainable-intensification>)

**Town Hall meeting** – this is common in North America where local constituents get to meet and question local councillors and politicians. (*Participedia* website. <https://participedia.net/en/methods/town-hall>)

**Triple-bottom line** is an accounting framework with three parts: social, environmental (or ecological) and financial. The triple bottom line (TBL) thus consists of three Ps: profit, people and planet. It aims to measure the financial, social and environmental performance of the corporation over a period of time. (*Economist article adapted from 2008. 'The Economist Guide to Management Ideas and Gurus.'* <https://www.economist.com/node/14301663>)

**Visual literacy** is defined as, 'the ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in the form of an image, extending the meaning of literacy, which commonly signifies interpretation of a written or printed text.'  
([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visual\\_literacy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visual_literacy))

**Vox pop** - popular opinion as represented by short informal comments from, and interviews with, members of the public, especially when broadcast or published.

**Well Told Story** - the youth media communications production company operating in Kenya and Tanzania and best known as the publishers of the Shujaaz comic book.

## Appendix 1

### Farm Radio International criteria/checklist for determining whether and how to deal with improved farming practices (IFPs) in our work

29 September 2014

#### Background

Most small-scale farmers would like to find ways of improving the results of their farming enterprises. Whether this means improving their yields, introducing more valuable or more suitable crops, increasing the fertility of their soil, reducing the amount of food that feeds insects, birds and rodents rather than their families, managing their water resources more effectively, improving household nutrition, or increasing household income farmers are interested in low cost ways of deriving more benefits from their farms.

In many cases, this means adopting new technologies or new practices – or even old or traditional practices that are new to them such as:

- New land preparation methods
- New planting methods (in rows, lower seeding rate, different spacing, etc.)
- New ways of increasing the fertility of soil
- New seed varieties that have higher yield, more nutritious produce, better resistance to pests, greater tolerance of drought, etc.
- New methods of weeding and controlling pests
- New ways of harvesting, threshing, storing produce

Improved farming practices come from a variety of sources. Farmers themselves innovate all the time and have done so for thousands of years. Sometimes, long-forgotten methods are rediscovered and adapted. Sometimes, accidental or deliberate cross breeding leads to better results. Many IFPs are developed through scientific research. This research may be done by public institutions, non-profit international research institutions, universities, or private sector companies. The last may be divided into large multinational companies and smaller national companies.

Some IFPs are controversial – especially new varieties of seeds and other planting materials.

One of the main things that Farm Radio International does is *share knowledge* with farmers about IFPs that can improve their success as farmers. Another thing FRI does is *promote the adoption of specific IFPs* by farmers who have made an informed decision to do so.

We share knowledge of IFPs in at least three ways

We:

- Provide broadcaster partners with general information about IFPs using **issue packs**. These packs help broadcasters understand the technology or practice, how it is different, its potential benefits and costs, how to apply the IFP, etc.
- Provide broadcaster partners with **news stories** about IFPs. This may include farmer concerns or protests about GMOs, new legislation, new research efforts and results, on the ground realities etc.
- Develop radio **scripts** about specific IFPs such as seeds and other inputs. The scripts do not *promote* their use but rather provide specific, balanced information and opinion about them that could have the effect of encouraging farmers to consider them.

In sharing this knowledge, we are bound by good journalistic standards of accuracy, fairness, balance, impartiality (except we are pro-farmer) and integrity.

We also promote the adoption of specific IFPs. For example, we

- Organize Participatory Radio Campaigns and other “impact projects”. The PRC encourages listeners to make an informed decision about whether or not to adopt a specific IFP, and then provides implementation advice for those who chose to adopt.

Since impact projects involve advocacy of a specific IFP, we need to be certain that FRI, as a pro-farmer organization, can stand behind it. Whether the IFP is an old practice brought to a new region (storing potatoes in sacks with ash) or a very new high-tech practice such as a GMO variety of banana that resists wilt, we need to assess it carefully against consistent criteria.

### Proposed process for assessing and approving an IFP for an impact project

We have established a set of criteria to guide us in assessing and approving an IFP for inclusion in our impact projects.

These criteria are being “beta tested” by staff with a number of IFPs proposed for new projects. We will conduct a more formal evaluation of the tool, which will involve having it completed by a number of people for each of at least three IFPs: one that we would normally consider uncontroversial; one that is quite new and developed by scientists but that we are already promoting (e.g. OFSP or Quality Protein Maize); and one that may be more high-tech, more controversial, and that we may be asked to promote sometime in the future. In addition to staff, we will ask subject matter specialists, including at least one with a critical perspective, to use the tool to give us their recommendation. Once the evaluation is complete, we will revise the criteria and make this tool an ordinary part of our program development process.

### Criteria and checklist for evaluating whether and how to address issues related to the promotion of improved farming practices (IFP) through impact radio programs.

Type/name of improved practice: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Radio/ICT activity being proposed

- ☐ Participatory radio campaign promoting specific improved farming practices
- ☐ Mini-drama or documentary promoting the improved farming practices
- ☐ Inclusion in EFRAS or PARS
- ☐ Training module for broadcasters on this improved farming practices
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria	Questions to ask	Assessment	Comments
<b>Risk over yield</b>			
1. This IFP is one that has been identified by farmers as one of the most important innovations that can deliver the biggest improvements to yields, resiliency and nutrition for at this time.	What has preliminary research and consultations with farmers and farmer’s organisations told us? Have farmers been engaged about the innovation?	<input type="radio"/> Completely true <input type="radio"/> Somewhat true <input type="radio"/> Probably not true <input type="radio"/> Not at all true <input type="radio"/> Uncertain	
2. The IFP provides a range of benefits including food for the family, income, local employment, conserving the natural resource base	What is the range of benefits offered by the IFP?	<input type="radio"/> Completely true <input type="radio"/> Somewhat true <input type="radio"/> Probably not true <input type="radio"/> Not at all true <input type="radio"/> Uncertain	
3. The IFP provides strategic and practical benefits to women and men, addresses the particular needs of women, and contributes to gender equality	Have preliminary gender analysis and consultations with female and male farmers been completed? What do they reveal?	<input type="radio"/> Completely true <input type="radio"/> Somewhat true <input type="radio"/> Probably not true <input type="radio"/> Not at all true <input type="radio"/> Uncertain	

Criteria	Questions to ask	Assessment	Comments
<b>Risk over yield</b>			
4. The IFP is affordable and will not make farmers dependent on one source of expensive inputs	Can farmers and farmer communities save/exchange seeds? Are there multiple suppliers? Are seeds input-dependent?	<input type="radio"/> Completely true <input type="radio"/> Somewhat true <input type="radio"/> Probably not true <input type="radio"/> Not at all true <input type="radio"/> Uncertain	
5. The IFP can be adapted and improved by farmers using resources that are available to them	<b>Can farmers use their hand tools and animal power?</b> Can they save their seeds? Can they modify the IFP?	<input type="radio"/> Completely true <input type="radio"/> Somewhat true <input type="radio"/> Probably not true <input type="radio"/> Not at all true <input type="radio"/> Uncertain	
6. The IFP can be explained by oral means	How do we know whether the IFP can be explained easily on a radio program?	<input type="radio"/> Completely true <input type="radio"/> Somewhat true <input type="radio"/> Probably not true <input type="radio"/> Not at all true <input type="radio"/> Uncertain	
7. There is a good market that farmers can access for the products of this IFP	Will there be buyers for the products? Will the sale of products generate good income for the family?	<input type="radio"/> Completely true <input type="radio"/> Somewhat true <input type="radio"/> Probably not true <input type="radio"/> Not at all true <input type="radio"/> Uncertain	
8. The IFP is appropriate even for very small farms: it does not require the farm to become larger to be economic	What costs must be incurred before small-scale farmers can use the IFP? Or to continue its use?	<input type="radio"/> Completely true <input type="radio"/> Somewhat true <input type="radio"/> Probably not true <input type="radio"/> Not at all true <input type="radio"/> Uncertain	
9. The IFP's impact on the natural environment and on bio-diversity is either modest or positive and can be mitigated by communities	What do we know – or can safely assume – about the IFP's impact on biodiversity and ecological systems?	<input type="radio"/> Completely true <input type="radio"/> Somewhat true <input type="radio"/> Probably not true <input type="radio"/> Not at all true <input type="radio"/> Uncertain	



Criteria	Questions to ask	Assessment	Comments
<b>Risk over yield</b>			
10. The IFP's impact on human health is positive	What do we know – or can safely assume – about the IFP's impact on human health?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Completely true</li> <li>o Somewhat true</li> <li>o Probably not true</li> <li>o Not at all true</li> <li>o Uncertain</li> </ul>	
11. The IFP is not controversial or the focus of negative international or national attention	Is it genetically modified organism? Has it been the subject of critical campaigns?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Completely true</li> <li>o Somewhat true</li> <li>o Probably not true</li> <li>o Not at all true</li> <li>o Uncertain</li> </ul>	
12. The IFP is accepted within national policy environment	Are the seeds authorized for official release?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Completely true</li> <li>o Somewhat true</li> <li>o Probably not true</li> <li>o Not at all true</li> <li>o Uncertain</li> </ul>	

**Is the IFP available, i.e. seeds?**

**If there is widespread adoption, what impact would that have (positive or negative)?**

Add to risk tool

**Recommendation:**

Based on the above assessment:

- ☐ I recommend that FRI accept this IFP for the purpose described above
- ☐ I recommend that we investigate further with project, partners KPs
- ☐ I recommend that FRI management, and, if required, the Program Committee and/or Board review this IFP before reaching a decision about accepting the IFP for the purpose described above
- ☐ I do not recommend that FRI accept this IFP

Name

Date

Organization and position

Signed

## Appendix 2

### CABI Campaign Design Template

This template is a 'how to guide' that describes the steps to building a campaign or a project. It is meant to ensure that all the dimensions of a development communication project have been considered to provide a space to document these decisions. So, a number of activities may need to have been completed, particularly around baseline research, to complete this document fully. The template can form the basis of internal and external communication about the project plan, including proposals. It is on the basis of this template that you can put together a detailed activity plan and budget. As a general guideline responses might be around 100 words on average.

#### Rationale

1. What is the problem/ opportunity?  
*Please describe as precisely as possible the issue including the scale of the issue.*
2. What are the consequences of the problem if unchecked or leaving the opportunity unexplored?
3. How are farmers relating to this problem? Is it a concern? How are they addressing it? How do they regard the impact on their livelihoods?
4. What are the solutions? *Include any evidence for its effectiveness*
5. How will the technical brief be developed? *In your description, explain the extent to which inputs are in place.*
6. Is there an environment to incentivise change? *For instance, are there output markets and good market facilitation?*
7. What are the policy implications? To what extent is the policy environment already enabling? Do you need to include policy change in the conceptualisation of the campaign?
8. Have you identified winners and losers? Reflect what you understand of the trade-offs that the intervention might present for individuals, and what the implications might be for your activities.
9. Why are you using a development communication approach? *Place in the activities in the context of a campaign with longer term goals by the describing change you expect to see in the short-term. Does this work fit into a longer term plan for changing farmers behaviour –if so how? (Project – Programme – Campaign)*
10. Is the purpose of this campaign: *(Select as appropriate)*
  - \_ To manage an emergency
  - \_ To stimulate early warning
  - \_ To support new technology transformation
  - \_ To update farmer maintenance*(The categorisation will inform some of the choices around methodology.)*

#### Methodology

11. Describe the farming audience for the campaign.  
*How is the farmer community disaggregated for these activities?*
12. What are the information gaps/ misinformation in the farmer community on this issue?
13. What are the other factors driving decisions on this and related issues? *(For instance livelihood, social desirability etc.)*

14. What are the communication preferences of the farmer community? *Across all media, including inter-personal channels. Also, who are the people with the most influence on these communities?*
15. Describe the other stakeholder audience? *How are the stakeholders disaggregated for these activities?*
16. What are the information gaps amongst key stakeholder groups on this issue?
17. What are other factors driving decisions on this and related issues for key stakeholder groups? *(For instance - does the information offer advice for a range of financial abilities)*
18. What are the communication preferences of key stakeholder groups? *Across all media, including inter-personal channels. Also, who are the people with the most influence on these communities?*
19. What are some of the key activities that have been happening in the sector on this issue?
20. Who are your partners? Explain those who are instrumental *(why you need their expertise e.g. research, community access, delivery expertise)* Explain those who are representative *(why and where you need them to participate in decision making e.g. they have been given a mandate by the national stakeholders, supports local accountability etc.)*
21. In view of what you understand of their context, how would you articulate the benefits for the farming community? *(These are your core messages.)*

22. Provide an overview of outputs. (Channel = radio, format = radio drama)

Channel	Format(s)	Supporting Materials	Key engagement/audience

23. How do the channels interact? Is this sequential? Do they engage disaggregated audiences simultaneously? Explain
24. How has an awareness of gendered roles featured in your design of the campaign?
25. How are you managing dialogue in the project/programme?
26. How have you done your episodic planning/'message briefing'? *This explains how you establish the thematic and specific focus of each communication deliverable*
27. How are you pretesting?
28. What indicators has the baseline provided for the activities?
29. How does your work plan reflect farmers' seasonal activities?
30. What are the key lessons from other campaigns that would apply here?

## Overview

31. What are the project/programme outcomes?
32. What are the deliverables? *A summary of scale and type of outputs*
33. Describe the areas where the project/programme is taking place?
34. What is the time frame of the current budget?
35. What is the current budget total?

36. Who are the investors?
37. What is the monitoring evaluation & learning reporting? *(What are the actions adopted to document and learn from the intervention? Is this work exploring any specific questions?)*
38. What is the key institutional experience that supports our ability to deliver this project?
39. Are there related programme or thematic area within the institution?
40. What is the current status of the project/programme? (including any reference to pilot activities or planned scaling)