BEYOND GOOD IDEAS: Private sector engagement in commercializing agricultural technologies

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What do you see?
Problems have denominators
Businesses and Governments have scale and sustainability as part of their DNA

BUSINESS \leftrightarrow ADDRESSABLE MARKET

GOVERNMENT \leftrightarrow RELEVANT POPULATION
But donors and projects have more complex incentives and timeframes.
Additional Complications

• Hard-to-protect IP and first-mover challenges
• Hard to monetize, long-term, or invisible benefits such as health and nutrition
• Public goods and barriers to collective action
• Crowding out vs. crowding in
Planning and Managing with Scale in Mind

• Work backwards from a concrete vision of sustainable deliver at scale
• Recognize that agriculture is a business, not a social sector, and philanthropy is no substitute for governments and markets
• Recognize but don’t romanticize the role of large companies
• Use projects surgically to facilitate permanent changes
• Accept that full institutionalization of changes at scale takes an average of 15 years
Think Scale Early

Source: Jim Hancock, World Bank Consultant
While one foot is on the accelerator, the other one needs to stay on the brake.
Prioritizing “intermediation” – the broken part of the innovation value chain
Documented Cases

- Hybrid Maize in Zambia
- Irrigated Rice in Senegal
- Two-wheel Tractors in Bangladesh
- PICS Bags in Kenya and DRC
- Kuroiler Chickens in Uganda

- One Acre Fund
- Babban Gona
- Hello Tractor
- Heat Stress Tolerant Maize
- Rift Valley Fever Vaccine

- E-Verify and Ag-Verify in Uganda
- Enabling Crop Analytics at Scale
- Orange Flesh Sweet Potatoes in Uganda, Mozambique, Tanzania and South Africa
10 Lessons from Research and Experience on Scaling Agricultural Technologies through Commercial Pathways

• **Lesson #1**: There’s no such thing as a “purely commercial” pathway to scale

• **Lesson #2**: Partnerships in the middle of the value chain are particularly important

• **Lesson #3**: The most vexing bottlenecks for scaling of pro-poor agricultural innovations are usually non-technological

• **Lesson #4**: Poor farmers’ time horizons tend to be extremely short and they tend to place a higher priority on minimizing risk than on maximizing reward
Lessons Learned (2)

• **Lesson #5**: Monopoly and/or monopsony are sometimes useful in the short run to build effective and efficient supply chains, but they often present challenges later.

• **Lesson #6**: Think subtraction, not addition.

• **Lesson #7**: Link scale and sustainability, and measure what matters.

• **Lesson #8**: The devil is in the details, especially logistics.

• **Lesson #9**: An ability to pivot is essential for all successful scaling efforts.

• **Lesson #10**: Never waste a crisis.
A bad system will defeat a good innovation every time
For more information…

• **Sourcebook on Scaling Agricultural Innovation**
  https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1040&context=scaleup

• **Community of Practice on Scaling Development Outcomes (CoP)**
  www.scalingcommunityofpractice.com

• **CoP Working Group on Agriculture and Rural Development**
  Contact: Lennart Woltering (CIMMYT): L.Woltering@CGIAR.org

• **CoP Working Group on Nutrition**
  Contact: Chytanya Kompala (ECF): Chytanya@eleanorcrookfoundation.org
THANK YOU