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| Session title: | Effective Instruments for Innovation Investment |
| Session number: | 5 |
| Type of session: | Livestreamed |
| Day: | Monday, 6 September 2021 |
| Time: | 10:00-11:00 EAT |
| No. of participants: | Unknown for the moment |
| Session Organizers: | Commission on Sustainable Agriculture Intensification (CoSAI) |
| Moderator: | Scarlett Crawford |
| Rapporteur: | Scarlett Crawford |
| Relevant outcome: | <p>Instruments supporting innovation generally require some form of brokering.</p> <p>Many instruments have some form of multi-stakeholder partnership.</p> <p>Participatory, user-led processes are most likely to result in new technologies and systems that are appropriate for a given context.</p> |
| Objectives: | <p>A recent study by the Commission on Sustainable Agriculture Intensification (CoSAI) revealed that only 7% of the investment in innovation in the Global South has explicit environmental outcomes and only half of that had clear social objectives. To transform the global system through increased investment in innovation, requires effective instruments that provide financial and/or non-financial support to innovation processes. The session will explore a cohort of instruments, with a focus on understanding the contexts in which they have been used effectively, enabling validation of preliminary findings and suggestions for further evidence.</p> |
| Speakers: | <p>(*Name, Title, Organization)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Brigid Letty, an agricultural development specialist from the Natural Resources Institute. |

- Dr Joshua Zake, the Executive Director of Environmental Alert, a national NGO in Uganda.

In addition to our speakers, we have four panellists.

- Dr Karen Munoko, the agribusiness and gender expert at the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA).
- Dr Madiodio Niasse, CoSAI commissioner and the former Director of the Secretariat of the International Land Coalition.
- Mr Ishmael Sunga, CEO of the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions, a farmer's organisation covering 12 countries in Africa.
- Mr Geoffrey Okidi, head of the Development Division in Agriculture Business Initiative in Uganda.

Main highlights:

(*For Insights and newsletter. To be based on the theme of the day. Fill in in bullet form)

- Farmers and end users should be the drivers of innovation; they should be involved in the process of creation. Having an innovation development process that does not involve and benefit end users means uptake and scaling will be impossible.
- End users (farmers) must also be included in innovation ownership. When we see ownership by end users (usually farmers), instruments have higher sustainability and longevity – staying relevant beyond the life of projects and pilots.
- Innovations must be situated in enabling environments – these environments can include the right legislative and regulatory environments, though also capacity building and knowledge transfer. Even if a new technology or 'gadget' is revolutionary, if it is not situated within the right environment, it has potential to fail.
- Instruments such as prizes recognize and highlight farmers as leaders and help promote innovation. This is important because often farmers are wrongly labelled as recipients of innovation rather than being leading innovators themselves.
- We need evidence-based innovations based on data and results – understanding both the demographics (including gender and age) and the position of all actors within the value chain and how the instruments will involve and affect them (either proportionally or disproportionately) is important for the success of the instrument. This understanding can provide the basis of equity – if we understand the benefits, we can share them equitably.
- We need to create a common language between farmers and researchers. There needs to be a common understanding to allow the transfer of knowledge between groups. This is critical for getting targeted and *usable* innovation.
- We need to establish metrics around the commercialization of these innovations – we need to know how successful they will be on the market.

KEY CHALLENGES

- Understanding the cost of innovation. Innovation has costs to farmers that they cannot always afford. Using instruments that also reduce and eliminate

transaction costs will have higher potential for success.

- Ensuring that the benefits of innovation touch all actors along the value chain in an equitable way. Even if innovations invoke increased economic productivity, tangible economic, environmental, and social outcomes will not be achieved if the rewards of this innovation are not evenly distributed throughout the value chain.

RECOMMENDATIONS/ NEXT STEPS

- Finalize the study presented, with lessons on what instruments are suitable for what contexts.
- Understand how various factors including enabling environments contribute to the success of different instruments.

Session Summary:

Approaches and instruments that facilitate innovations achieving long-term environmental, social, and economic outcomes must be farmer centered and must be situated in an environment that enables both uptake and longevity. These are the key findings from our lively session on Monday at the AGRF Summit.

To inform our Approaches and Instruments Study, our panelists discussed how including farmers as the drivers of innovation and involving them in the innovative process will help ensure that the innovation benefits end users and will strengthen innovation uptake and scaling. In addition to this, the panel noted that farmers and other end users should be included in innovation ownership as it increases instruments' longevity and can help them stay relevant and implementable beyond the life of projects and pilots.

The importance of the enabling environment is also critical for innovation success. Innovations must be situated in environments that have supportive legislative and regulatory characteristics as well as capacity building and knowledge transfer conditions. The new 'gadget' can be revolutionary, though if it is not situated within the right environment, it has potential to fail.

Our panelists emphasized that the benefits of innovation need to touch all actors along the value chain in an equitable way to achieve broad reaching social outcomes and that demographic evidence can support this equitable distribution of benefits. Evidence can provide the basis of equity – if we understand the players within the value chain and their characteristics, we will be more easily able to share the benefits to those that need it most. Finally, innovation's transaction costs were also mentioned as impinging on farmers capacity to uptake and continue using innovation. The panel noted that those approaches and instruments reducing and eliminating transaction costs will have higher potential for successes. Our approaches and instruments study will incorporate these findings and provide a critical review of what is working and what is not working in the innovation space.

Tweetable quotes with timestamp:

(*For podcast and to go to AGRF Communication for social media. Minimum 3 per session)

- 28:30: *In many cases farmers are considered as mere recipients of innovation products, but the reality is that farmers themselves are primarily innovators.* – Dr Madiodio Niassa
- 43:56: *The question is, what is it that impinges on the welfare of the farmers? And we all know that a lot of it is about fairness and equity in the distribution of risk and reward in the entire value chain. Innovation... is not talking about balancing the power relations, and that is a fundamental problem. You can increase efficiency and productivity all you want, but if the pipeline is blocked and it delivers poorly to you, its not going to be very helpful.* – Mr Ishmael Sunga.
- 36:57: *Designing tools that produce evidence-based results... is absolutely critical because... it provides a monitoring process for knowing the level of engagement for each value chain actor and their demographics... and this helps with decision making.* – Dr Karen Munoko

How has the session contributed to the AGRF outcomes?

*(For end of AGRF communique/ Press release. List 3 - 5 top outcomes)

1. Investment in innovation that supports the equitable and sustainable transformation of Africa’s food system is ensure
2. Ensuring Africa’s smallholder farmers are central to the innovation process, from design to impact, that they are considered innovators (not just recipients of innovation) and that the innovation overcomes barriers and risks for smallholder farmers is critical to ensure benefit.
3. Innovation is not just about science and technology, to ensure sustainable impact, innovation must be considered and implemented in policy, finance and capacity development (from individual to institutional) for long term sustainable impact.

COMMITMENTS

Utilize the instruments evaluated to support improved investment in innovation for sustainable agriculture intensification