



Lesson learnt towards building pathways for Innovation: India Chapter

14th October, 2021



Background

Four case studies from India on innovations at scale in SAI

Definition of SAI

Transformative changes in agriculture and food systems that enable

- meet increasing global needs for affordable, nutritious, safe and healthy food,
- while protecting and improving the natural environment and
- promoting resilient livelihood and social equity

Innovation

A successful Innovation is an intervention or a bundle of interventions that

- has created a long-lasting and transformative change towards SAI outcomes
- can be in technology, finance, institutional structures, governance, policy, and business.
- is not necessarily a novel idea
- has scaled up significantly

**Lesson learnt towards building pathways for
Innovation**

Lessons learnt towards building pathways for Innovation

- End-user needs to be placed at the center of the innovation via end-user engagement and development of tailored context specific solutions
- Partnerships that are crafted based on the needs of the innovation program, managed rigorously and evolving based on the changing context drive success
- Leveraging formal and informal networks/organization in the producer ecosystem (FPOs, Self Help Groups, etc.) can be an efficient as well as effective way to engage with a broader farmer base
- Support from relevant government stakeholders can come via different channels (funding schemes, new regulations, endorsements)
- Unlocking funding for agri innovations remains a key challenge; innovative investment mechanisms and more patient-capital required

Lesson 6: Leadership drives the direction and success of the innovation

Characteristics of Leaders

- Ability of leaders to Influence internal/external stakeholders to benefit the innovation program
 - Replicable: capacity to champion a cause and inspire others, capitalize network, think strategically, etc.
 - Difficult to replicate: Influence from political affiliations and power

Recommendation

- *Invest in recruiting/developing the leaders for the innovation program*
- *Caution against: Innovation models that succeeded because of a non-replicable characteristic of leadership*

Lesson 7: Innovations flourish when a mix of formal and informal actions come together

Mixed trajectories

- Informal/unplanned actions often sow the seeds for formal trajectories, e.g.
 - CSOs developed the groundwork (a network of farmers or pilots of alternative farming methods) before formalization of innovation programme
 - Private sector leader investing in preliminary development of a sector-wide solution and reaching out informally to other players to set-up a multistakeholder initiative

Recommendation

- *Invest in creating space for informal action and interaction, e.g. networking platforms, innovation hubs.*

Lesson 8: A strategically crafted but continuously evolving bundle of interventions is essential

Complementary Interventions

- Bundling of interventions necessary to address different needs/challenges in innovation trajectory:
 - With in zone of influence (develop market, develop partners, technology development, etc.): Investment from initiator
 - Outside (e.g. policy shift or value chain development required for private sector programme, etc.): Collaborate (multi stakeholder initiatives, PPPs)
- Bundling happens both proactively and reactively
 - Proactive: Determined by initiator's vision and horizon of planning
 - Reactively: Determined by ability to respond to learnings and changing context

Recommendation

- *Invest in capacity of innovators to keep the bundle of interventions effective by*
 - *strategizing for a reasonable time horizon,*
 - *remaining responsive to new findings*
 - *Identifying partners for interventions beyond the zone of influence*

Lesson 9: Trust building with key stakeholders is essential for long term sustainability

Trust

- Trust among the different stakeholders
 - Trust between partners
 - Trust of funders
 - Trust of the end-users
- Instruments of trust building:
 - Relevant and targeted evidence generation (e.g. a successful pilot, testimonial from peer-farmers, transparent availability of data on a key concern)
 - Communication and active relationship building
 - Alignment in long-term vision and co-creation

Recommendation

- *Investment in instruments that establish trust with all the key stakeholders*
- *Invest in understanding stakeholder motivation and behaviour to keep the instruments of trust targeted*

Thank you.