

Transforming Agrifood Systems in West and Central Africa (TAFS - WCA) Initiative

Investment Action Plan - Introductory Workshop Report

Accelerating investments in CGIAR solutions in West and Central Africa

Organized by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture and
International Potato Center

Online, June 1, 2023,

Murat Sartas, Jan Low

I. Background

CGIAR West and Central African Food System Transformation Initiative work package 5: Technology, Innovation, Communication, Knowledge, and Stakeholder Management (TICKS) assists innovators in attracting more investment and increasing the impact of their innovative solutions. One key instrument of TICKS is the investment action planning process in which the selected innovator teams are provided systematic and continuous support to draft a winning investment action plan. This workshop is the first instance of the investment action process.

II. Description

The investment action planning workshop introduces the overall work plan of the TICKS work package and describes the process to the innovator teams. It also includes a reflective data collection process powered by digital forms and cloud databases.

Date: June 1, 2023, Location: Online}

Hosts: IITA and CIP

Participating Organizations: Africa Rice, ABC, CIP, CSIR (Ghana), ICIPE, IITA

The number of Expected Participants: 18

Event Objectives:

1. Introduce the work plan of CGIAR West and Central African Food System Transformation Initiative - Technology, Innovation, Communication, Knowledge and Stakeholder Management Work Package
2. Introduce the investment action plan process
3. Collect data on the critical characteristics of the innovative solutions in the portfolio of the initiative
4. Collect data on the critical characteristics of the context the innovative solutions operate in

Expected Results:

1. At least 15 innovators are informed about the investment action planning activities of the initiative

2. Information about at least 6 innovative solutions and the context they are aimed to achieve impact is collected

Sessions:

1. Welcoming
2. Introduction to the Butter Tool
3. Facilitated administration of innovators registers form
4. Know your innovation
5. Know your context
6. Draft a short investment pitch
7. The way forward

III. Agenda

Start	End	Session Name	Session Type	Lead/ Facilitator	Speakers	Link
16:00	16:10	Welcoming and introduction to Butter	Welcome	Jan	Murat	https://app.butter.us/recording/83c012ef-225f-4e97-b4b2-bda10ed4e7f4
16:10	16:17	Facilitated administration of innovators register form	Facilitated data generation	Murat		
16:17	16:50	Know your innovation	Facilitated data generation	Murat		
16:50	17:20	Know your context	Facilitated data generation	Murat		
17:20	17:25	Draft a short investment pitch	workshop	Murat		
17:25	17:40	The way forward and closure	Reflection	Jan	Murat	

IV. Participant List

No	Name	Email	Organization(s)	Roles
1	Aminou Arouna	A.Arouna@cgiar.org	Africa Rice Center	participant
2	Herve Mwizerwa	Herve.Mwizerwa@cgiar.org	International Potato Center	participant
3	Jan Low	j.low@CGIAR.ORG	International Potato Center	lead/facilitator, speaker, participant
4	Murat Sartas	murat.sartas@gmail.com	Wageningen University and Research Centre & International Institute of Tropical Agriculture	lead/facilitator, speaker, participant
5	Walter Ochimati	w.ocimati@cgiar.org	Alliance of Bioversity International & the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT)	participant
6	Brice Gbaguidi	b.gbaguidi@cgiar.org	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture	participant
7	Razack Adeoti	R.Adeoti@cgiar.org	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture	participant
8	Djana Mignouna	d.mignouna@cgiar.org	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture	participant
9	Desire Kagabo	D.Kagabo@cgiar.org	Alliance of Bioversity International & the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT)	participant
10	Daniel Rostand Dzepe-Togue	D.Dzepe-Togue@cgiar.org	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture	participant
11	Julius Juma Okello	J.Okello@cgiar.org	International Potato Center	participant

No	Name	Email	Organization(s)	Roles
12	Beatrice Ekesa	b.ekesa@cgiar.org	Alliance of Biodiversity International & the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT)	participant
13	Moses Owori	m.owori@cgiar.org	Alliance of Biodiversity International & the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT)	participant
14	Wilfred Yergo	W.Yergo@cgiar.org	Africa Rice Center	participant
15	Ruth Prempeh	ginathompsonh@yahoo.com	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (Ghana)	participant

V. Materials Used in the Event

No	Material Name	Material Description	Material Type
1	Presentation on Investment Planning Workshop	<p>A short presentation briefly describing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the 2023 work plan of CGIAR West and Central African Transformation Initiative WP 5 Technology, Innovation, Communication, Knowledge and Stakeholder Management (TICKS) The investment action plan process The key success factors for the investments action planning 	Presentation
2	Video Record	Full record of the workshop	Video
3	CGIAR West and Central African Food System Transformation Initiative Investment Action Plan - Innovator register form	An online form integrated to a cloud database including contact information of the participants and their expectations from the workshop	Online Form
4	CGIAR West and Central African Food System Transformation Initiative Investment Action Plan - Know your solution form	An online form integrated to a cloud database including key information about the innovative solutions innovator teams aims to attract investment	Online Form
5	CGIAR West and Central African Food System Transformation Initiative Investment Action Plan - Know Your Context Form	An online form integrated to a cloud database including key contextual information relevant for investors	Online Form

VI. Results and Learning

Brief Overview

The event was successful in introducing the work of the TICKS team and the investment action planning process. It also led to the collection of a significant amount of information for the investment action plans.

Key Highlights or Takeaways

- The innovators felt comfortable about using the novel butter tool and found it very interactive and attractive
- 8 of the 12 innovator teams were present. It appears that the interest in the support provided by the investment action planning team is not complete at this stage
- Interactive workshop integrating data collection via forms can be an effective way to collect data

Notable Quotes or Insights from Participants

- "Effective approach for compiling preliminary information" Razack Adeoti
- "Normally, I am skeptical using yet another new tool but I enjoyed using butter" Jan Low
- "As usual, Murat pushed us to think deeper about our innovative solutions" Jan Low
- "It takes thinking to be able to answer the simple questions" Walter Ochimati

Event Most engaging session and key points

"Know your solution" was the most engaging session. It was the first exposure of the innovators to using forms to respond to thinking questions during a live online event. The facilitators have the participants walk through the questions and explain in detail.

Event networking and collaboration opportunities

It was the first time for many participants to meet, but they could not interact much as the workshop focused on innovative solutions. Networking should be prioritized in later in-person events.

Event issues or encountered obstacles

- Some participants could not log in using the link. A few browsers are not compatible with Butter.

- Some participants could not find out how to allow Butter to access audio and video

Solutions implemented

- The facilitators sent an email including the link and the instructions.
- They also showed how to access the audio and video allowance set by sharing the screen

Participant feedback summary

The feedback on the workshop was positive to very positive. The participants enjoyed the colorful interface of the butter and the high interactivity of the workshop.

Some of the post-workshop feedback:

- “Great workshop”
- “Very good”
- “Very pleased that 9 showed up. I was hoping for 10, but those who came did a good job participating”
- “Effective approach for compiling preliminary information”

Participants' suggestions for improvement

The innovators suggested the following improvements:

- “Hope we can have opportunities to discuss and critique our responses.”
- “The understanding of a question was fuzzy”
- “A few more slides defining concepts before starting on the second survey on knowing the context“
- “Participants should be taken through the survey questions before taking the survey“
- “Better directions on which browser to use to access the program up front“
- “Explain this tool in advance“
- “Come back deeply in the template“
- “Get more participants for next time”

Event lessons learned for future events

- Sending the instructions about the butter once was good but not sufficient. A second reminder an hour before the workshop can be good
- Some of the online form concepts might be new for the innovators. Adding a conceptual deck to the tool before sharing the surveys could be good

VII. The Way Forward

Key decisions

- 8 innovator teams agreed to participate in the investment action planning process and receive support
- Innovators agreed to check and complete [the innovation and scaling course](#)

Event follow-up actions

Designing an interactive dashboard to enable innovators to see their progress could be very helpful for decentralizing the investment efforts.

Acknowledgments

We thank CGIAR West and Central African System Transformation Initiative Funders for their support.

Photos

