

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY SERVICES

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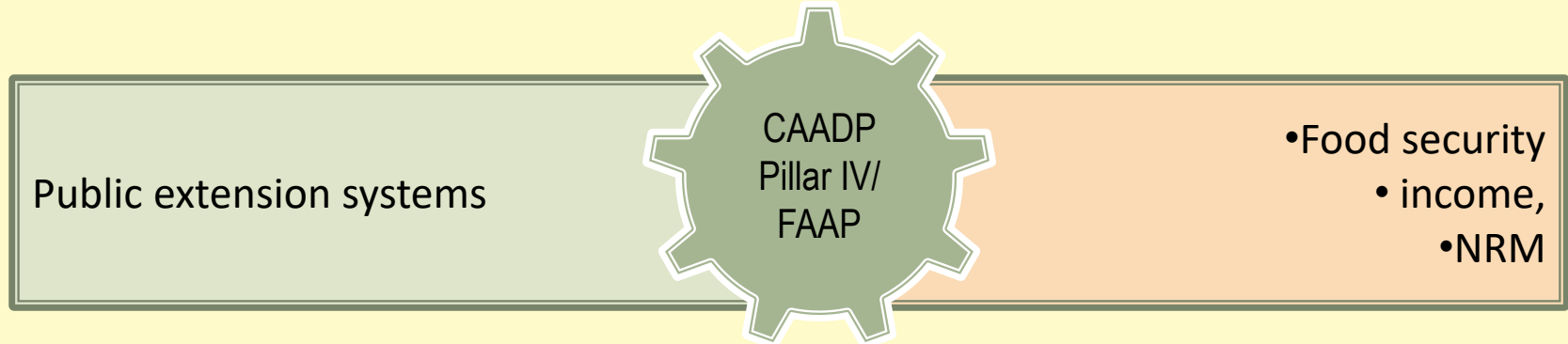
SCOPE

- Introduction –what is an innovation/ innovative approach (IA)
- Context for AAS innovation
- AFAAS Criteria for assessing IAs
- Scaling up and out of IAs through AFAAS
- Challenges and gaps

What is an Innovation/ Innovative approach?

- Many definitions so better to focus on the essence and elements
- “A new way of doing something” *(Swanson 2012)*
- Elements from <http://www.businessdictionary.com>
 - The process of translating an idea or invention into a good or service that creates value for a targeted user;
 - Replicable at an economical cost;
 - satisfies a specific need;
 - deliberate application of information, imagination and initiative;
 - Involves risk-taking therefore distinguished from imitation

CONTEXTS FOR AND EXAMPLES OF AAS INNOVATION

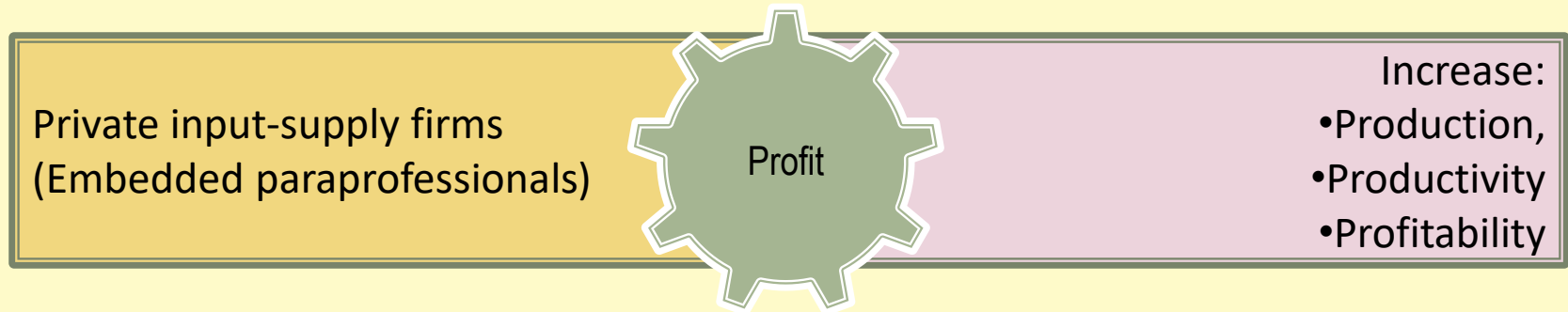


NAADS in Uganda

MALAWI EXAMPLE OF PLEURALISTIC EXTENSION *(cited by Swanson 2011)*

- The MOA's Dept. of Agricultural Extension (DAE) has 2,175 public extension workers within a decentralized extension system;
- At least 26 donor funded NGOs, most at the district level, with an average of 23 extension staff/NG;
- Six farmer associations and export companies (tobacco, tea, etc.), with a total of 93 extension staff that provide “commodity specific” advisory services to the farmers who produce and sell these products to these organizations.

CONTEXTS AND EXAMPLES OF AAS INNOVATION (continued)



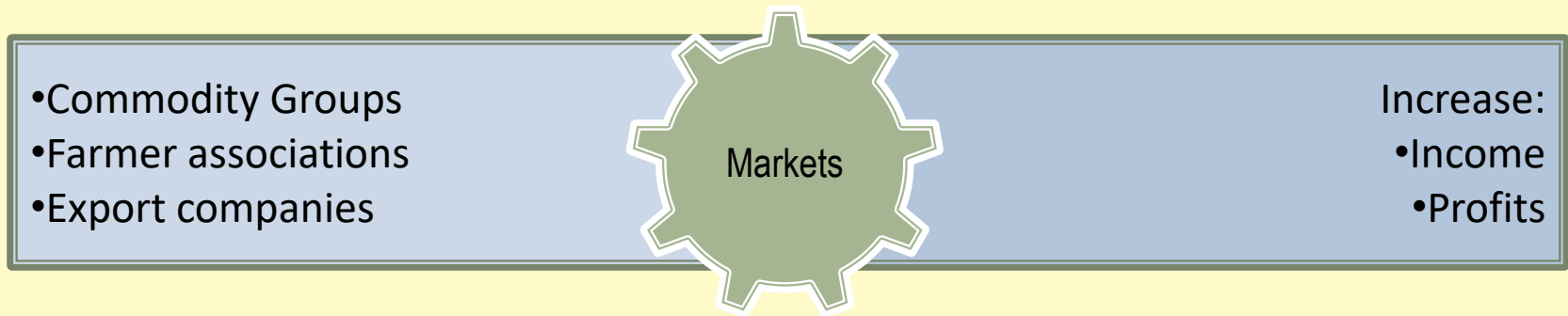
INDIA EXAMPLE:

Input supply dealers converted into paraprofessionals through Distance Education leading to a Diploma (*Swanson 2012*)

CAMBODIA EXAMPLE:

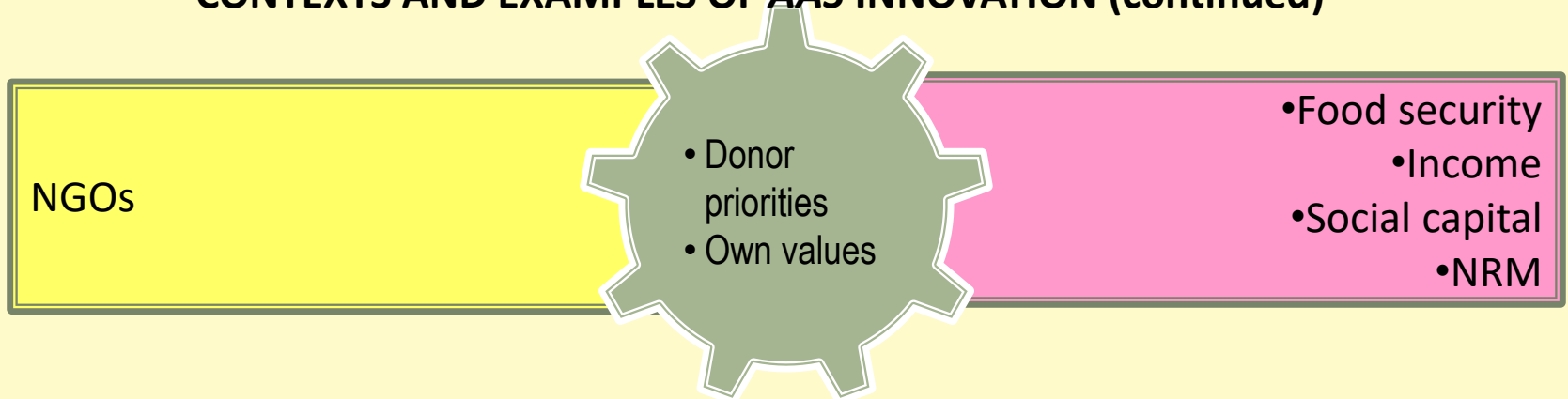
- *iDE Cambodia* is developing a Farm Business Advisers model
- a micro-franchise that bundles good quality agricultural inputs with competent technical advice and a strong focus on customer service. <http://www.ide-cambodia.org/fba/>

CONTEXTS AND EXAMPLES OF AAS INNOVATION (continued)



- In many tropical and subtropical countries, tea, coffee, cocoa, tobacco, cotton, sugarcane, oil palm, as well as bananas, oranges and spices are commercial export crops.
- Advisory services for each of these crops are largely handled directly by the export firms and/or in collaboration with commodity groups established to enhance these exports.
- Most export firms provide these services and inputs directly to these participating farmers, with payment for both inputs and advisory services being recovered at the time of sale (i.e. they are sustainable)

CONTEXTS AND EXAMPLES OF AAS INNOVATION (continued)



- BRAC started in 1972 in Bangladesh and is the largest NGO in Bangladesh and now spreading into poor Asian and African countries.
- Largely a micro-credit NGO, BRAC gets women farmers organized into groups and then provides them with advisory services, as well as seeds and fertilizer.
- In addition to agricultural advisory services, BRAC also provides health, education & social services.

CONTEXTS AND EXAMPLES OF AAS INNOVATION (continued)



EXAMPLES

- AAS in developed countries e.g. IALB in Germany (<http://www.ialb.org/>)
- There is a gap that needs innovation for AAS approaches that use private funding for paying fees to professional extension workers to deliver services to small scale farmers and rural value chain actors in developing countries
- KIVA (<http://www.kiva.org/>) gives pointers on the way to go

AFAAS CRITERIA FOR INNOVATIVENESS

The criteria of an innovative AAS to be adopted by AFAAS were derived from:

- The principles laid out in the Framework for African Agricultural Productivity (FAAP).
- Inputs from the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS);
- The inputs from stakeholder consultations involving the AFAAS/IFAD Project countries

AFAAS CRITERIA FOR INNOVATIVENESS

1. Empowers farmers/ value chain actors to participate meaningfully in setting priorities and work programs
2. Gives responsibility and control over resources to the beneficiaries at the appropriate level of the value chain
3. Allows delivery of services by many actors e.g. Public, NGO, Private sector contributing skills and knowledge
4. Is based on the external and internal evidence of knowledge, success and sustainability in terms of livelihoods and economic considerations

AFAAS CRITERIA FOR INNOVATIVENESS (continued)

5. Has effective feedback mechanism to research, capacity building, private sector, ...
6. Is sustainable in terms of fiscal, economic, social and environmental needs of the actors in the VC
7. Has effective documentation of the processes, operations and management of the approach
8. Has equitable cost sharing for service provision
9. Has gender and special interest groups mainstreaming at all levels

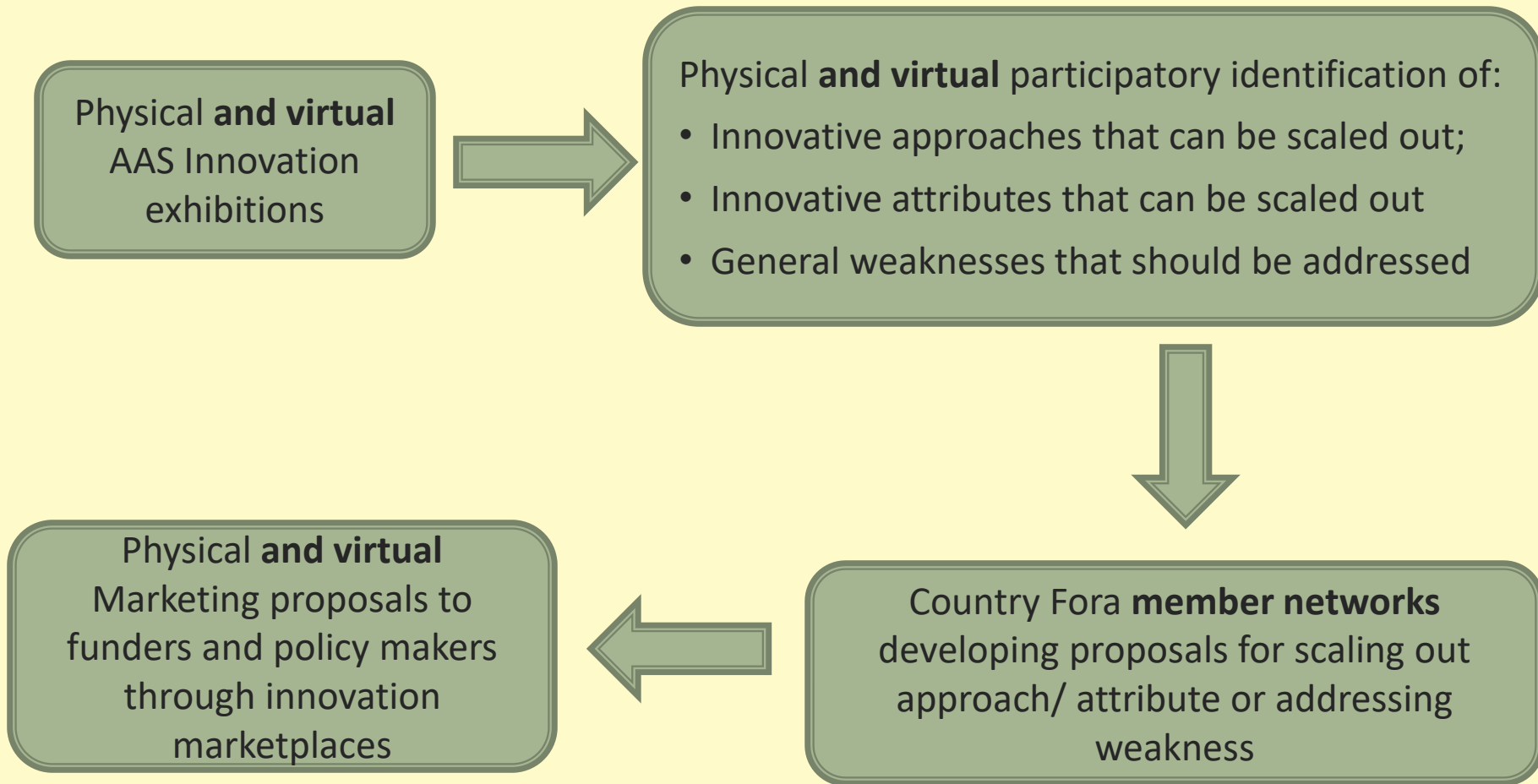
AFAAS CRITERIA FOR INNOVATIVENESS

10. Is scalable and adaptable
11. Embraces value chain considerations/ market orientation
12. Utilises modern ICT for CIKM
13. Integrates linkages to support services
14. Takes into consideration indigenous knowledge systems

SCALING UP AND OUT OF INNOVATIVE APPROACHES THROUGH AFAAS

- Innovation exhibitions
- Participatory identification of:
 - Innovative approaches that can be scaled out;
 - Innovative attributes that can be scaled out
 - General weaknesses that should be addressed
- Country Fora developing proposals for scaling out approach/attribute or addressing weakness
- Marketing proposals to funders and policy makers through innovation marketplaces

SCALING UP AND OUT OF INNOVATIVE APPROACHES THROUGH AFAAS



Some of the many challenges

- Many imitators, few innovators (risk averseness);
- No mechanisms for supporting AAS innovation - especially from the private sector (again risk averseness);
- Difficulty of locating where innovations are taking place;
- No incentives for scaling out;
- “knowledge impermeable” AAS institutions;
- Impatience caused by poor and unsystematic learning culture (throwing the baby out with the bath water)
- Fluid public policy environments

Thank you!!