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# Update on the USAID/BFS Research Impact Assessment

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**Tyrell Kahan & Annica Wayman**

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*Photo credit:* Kashish Das Shrestha, USAID

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# BACKGROUND

- Research investments "ensure a pipeline of innovations, tools and approaches designed to improve agriculture, food security, resilience and nutrition priorities in the face of complex, dynamic challenges."

- USAID's commitment to Collaborating, Learning and Adapting and the creation of the GFSA, GFSS and GFS Research Strategy inspired a reflection on the FtF research investments

- Enhance the documentation and communication of the outcomes and impacts of FtF research activities to improve the ability to demonstrate their contributions to the goals of GFSS

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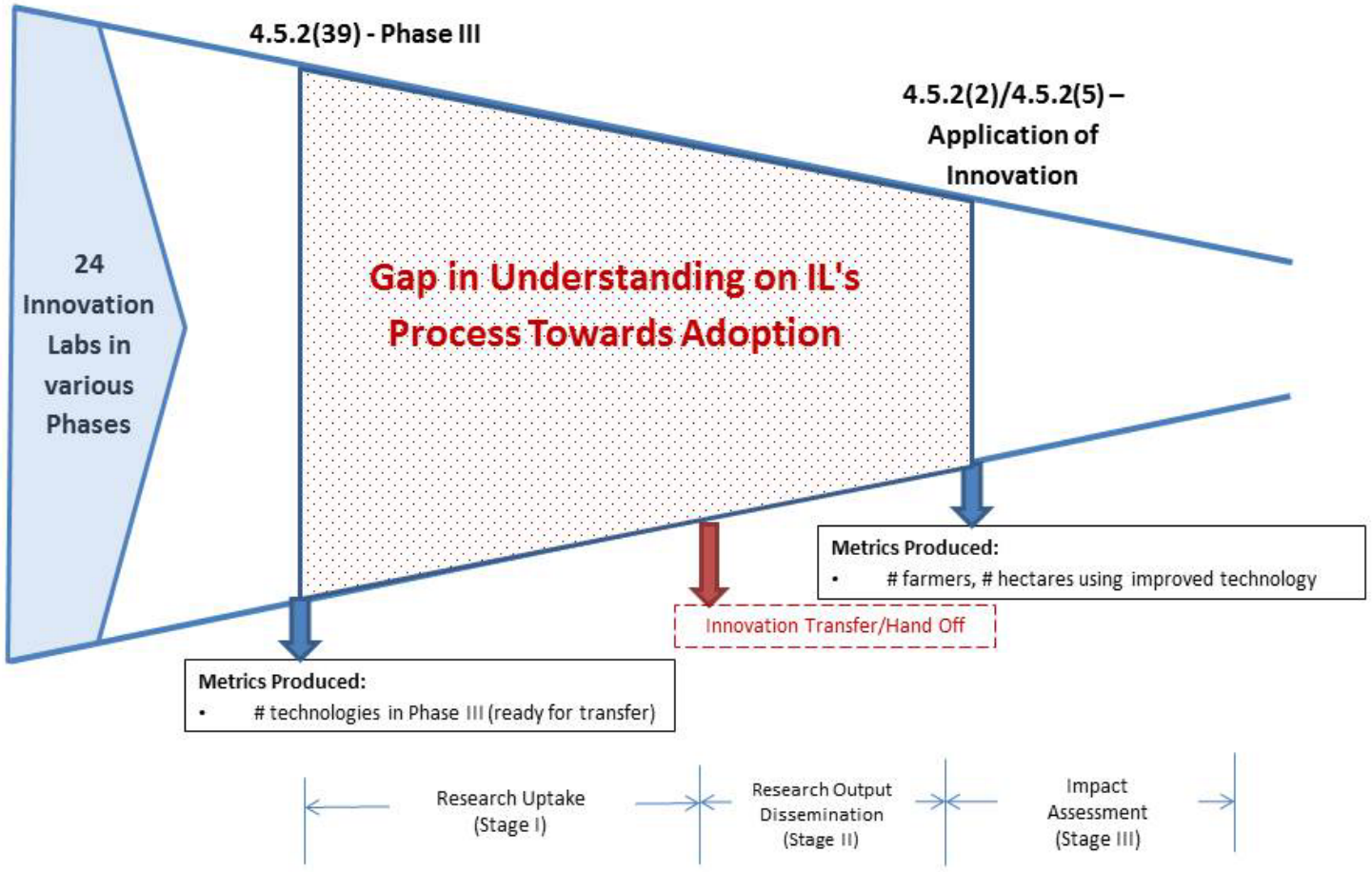
# RESEARCH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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# RESEARCH UPTAKE STUDY

- **Objective**
  - Gain a better understanding of how the Phase III research outputs of ILs are being transferred to entities from the public and/or private sectors for dissemination and use by farmers

- **Project Implementers**
  - Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Collaborative Research on Sustainable Intensification (SIIL)
    - B. Jan Middendorf, Ph.D. (Project Lead)
    - Zach Stewart, Ph.D.

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# RESEARCH UPTAKE STUDY

- The Phase III innovations from the FtF Innovation Labs were identified from the Research Rack Up
- SIIL implemented an on-line survey using Qualtrics™, analyzed data and created report
- Survey was designed for IL Directors to report on the transfer or planned transfer of innovations from each IL to entities that are facilitating their adoption and dissemination

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# RESULTS

- **Survey included 130 innovations from 12 FtF Innovation Labs**

- **105/130 innovations (80.8%) were reported as transferred**
  - About *2/*3 of all transferred innovations were categorized as either Management and Cultural Practices (34.6%) or Biological (39.2%)

- **182 'cases' of innovation transfer to a dissemination entity**
  - Over half of the 'cases' of innovation transfer were to Host Country (Government) (34.3%) or Private Sector (24.3%) organizations
  - 96 unique dissemination entities

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# CHALLENGES TO INNOVATION TRANSFER

- **Partners**
  - Finding appropriate partners to scale the innovation
  - Finding appropriate private pathways for low value crops
- **Adoption/Scaling**
  - Understanding scaling and the variation of optimal dissemination processes according to inherent qualities of innovations and target country context
  - Identifying and handling immature innovations
  - Insufficient enabling environment
  - Innovations that are important to improving production quality are difficult to promote if a clear financial incentive doesn't exist
  - The lack of a sustainable seed system impedes true adoption
- **Monitoring the dissemination and adoption of an innovation both during and after transfer occurs**
- **Acquiring investments that appropriately support scaling including technology transfer, adaptation, and dissemination**

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# SUGGESTED GOOD PRACTICES FOR INNOVATION TRANSFER

- **Partnerships**
  - Identify appropriate scaling entities, communicate with them early in the process, and continue to do so during and after the transfer process
- **Impact Pathway Plan (IPP) and Project Planning**
  - Well developed IPP can be very valuable
  - Understand timeframe required to achieve project objectives, create sustainable relationships, and build local capacity for innovation
- **End User**
  - Engage the end-users during the planning, research, and product development/adaptation process
- **Policy**
  - Invest in research and policy needs before technology dissemination in order to ensure an appropriate enabling environment is present

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# TAKEAWAYS FROM RESEARCH UPTAKE STUDY

- **Verification of the Research Rack Up**
- **Project Management and Planning**
- **Project Monitoring and Evaluation**
- **Inform Stage II of the Research Impact Assessment (Research Output Dissemination Study)**

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# STAGE II OF RESEARCH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- **Research Output Dissemination Study (Stage II)**
  - Study the dissemination, use, and adoption of a subset of transferred innovations identified in the Research Uptake Study
  - Observe how entities working on dissemination, use, and adoption are working and engaging the ILs during the scaling process
  - Evaluate design and implementation of dissemination plans and relevant enabling environment factors
  - Determine the current and potential outcomes and impacts of the innovations on the target populations

- **SIIL will manage the sub-award**

  http://www.k-state.edu/siil/index.html

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# DISCUSSION

- **Feedback on Research Uptake Study (Stage I)**
- **Additional Challenges or Suggested Best Practices for Innovation Transfer**
- **Approaches or considerations to measuring and monitoring impact of agriculture research**
  - **Frameworks or Conceptual Models**
  - **Metrics**
  - **Timing**
    - **Reporting**
    - **Phase of research**

Photo Credit: Rhiannon O'Sullivan, World Vegetable Center

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# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**U.S. Government's Global Food Security Strategy and Technical Guidance**
(https://feedthefuture.gov/lp/guidance-and-tools-global-food-security-programs)

**U.S. Government's Global Food Security Research Strategy**
(https://feedthefuture.gov/resource/us-governments-global-food-security-research-strategy)

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# APPENDIX

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# RESULTS

**Table 1.** ***Frequencies of Innovation Categories and Percentage Transferred.***

| Category | Frequency[b] | Number Transferred/Frequency | Number of Entities Involved in Transfer |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mechanical and Physical | 18 (13.8%) | 10/18 (55.6%) | 15 |
| Biological | 51 (39.2%) | 43/51 (84.3%) | 68 |
| Chemical | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 |
| Management and Cultural Practices | 45 (34.6%) | 40/45 (88.9%) | 70 |
| Other[a] | 16 (12.3%) | 12/16 (75%) | 29 |
| Total | 130 | 105/130 (80.8%) | 182 |

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*[a]The "Other" responses included "financial technology," "food science," "diagnostic," "testing," "pheromone chemical put into the trap," and "includes both biological & management and cultural practices. One IL indicated that their innovations related to "all of the above" categories.*
*[b]Phase III innovations*

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