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Introduction

Agronomic innovations are difficult to promote because in most cases the technologies are not visible but instructional. However, two projects, the African Cassava Agronomy Initiative (ACAI) and Cassava Weed Management Project (CWMP) have joined forces and are showing the way on how to disseminate agronomic technologies at scale.

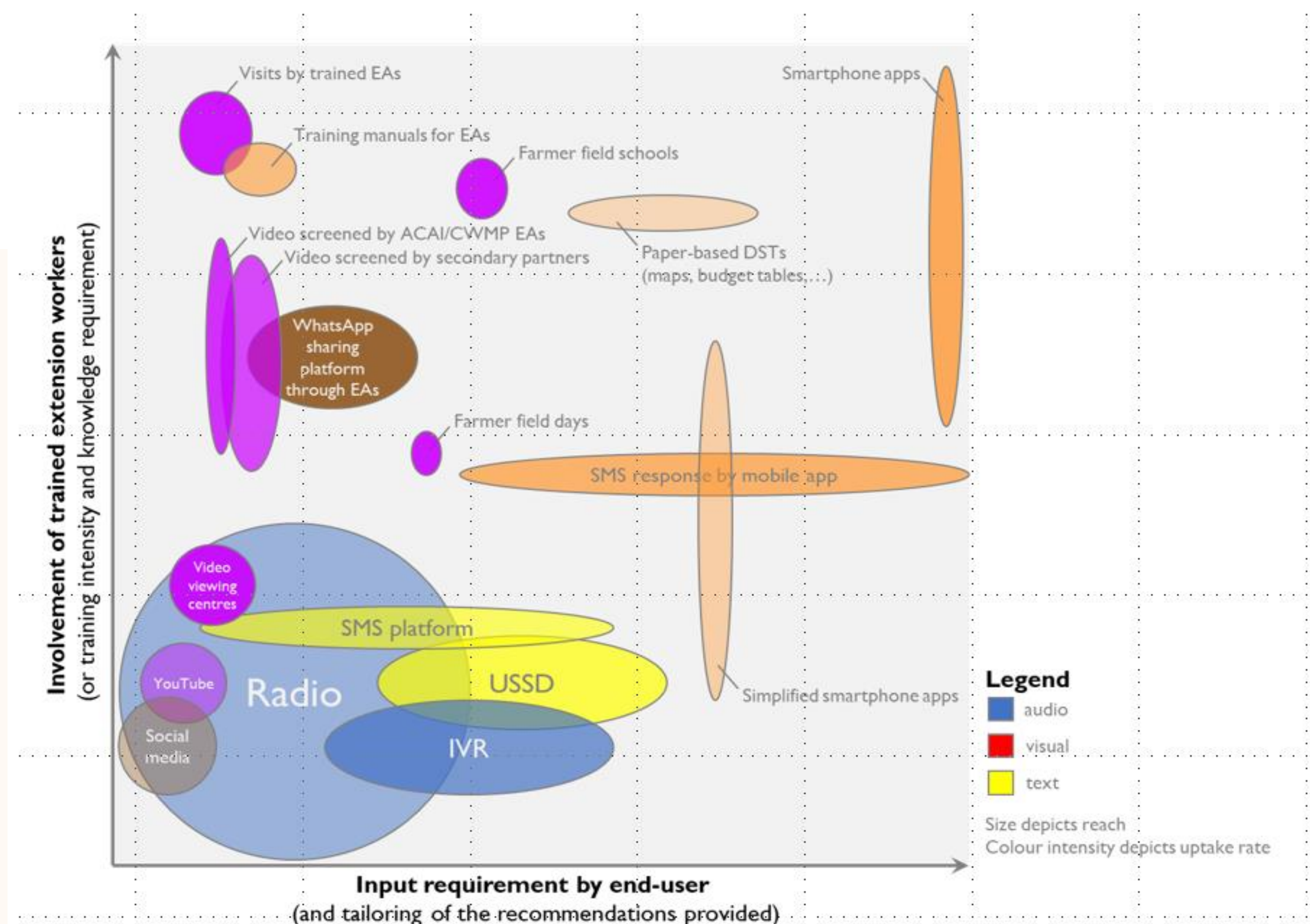


Fig. 1: Trade-off between cost/effort/time and tailoring of digital tools.

Methods

CWMP and ACAI in the last six years have developed a package of agronomic recommendation known as the Six Steps to Cassava Weed Management & Best Planting Practices. The package is being disseminated through four domains:

Traditional extension domain

Two hundred and sixty-six (266) demos were established in collaboration with state extension agents. Each extension agent mobilized at least 50 farmers to the demos. Spray service providers were linked to the demos and trained to support advisory services. There were also farmer field days to show and tell. Agro-dealers were connected to the demos, and the Six Steps to Cassava Weed Management & Best Planting Practices toolkit was shared with them for onward delivery to farmers.



Fig. 2: Training of spray service providers and agrodealers linked to demos

Digital extension domain

The extension agents were provided mini projectors to show videos on the Six Steps to Cassava Weed Management & Best Planting Practices in communities. The project also engaged Viamo's interactive voice recording (IVR) service of Airtel using 3-2-1. Radio programs were also used to disseminate the toolkit to farmers. Other avenues include SMS, WhatsApp and other social media platforms for awareness creation.



Table 3. ACAI/CWMP uses miniprojectors to train farmers in remote areas without power supply

Partnership domain

Two partnerships were employed:

- (A) Partnership with the private sector companies such as Bayer, UPL, and Syngenta. These companies are supporting the radio programs of the project. The companies are also printing the Six Steps to Cassava Weed Management & Best Planting Practices toolkit and sharing with farmers.
- (B) Partnership with ongoing programs such as Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), and GIZ. These are programs that are using the Six Steps to Cassava Weed Management & Best Planting Practices toolkit for their farmers.

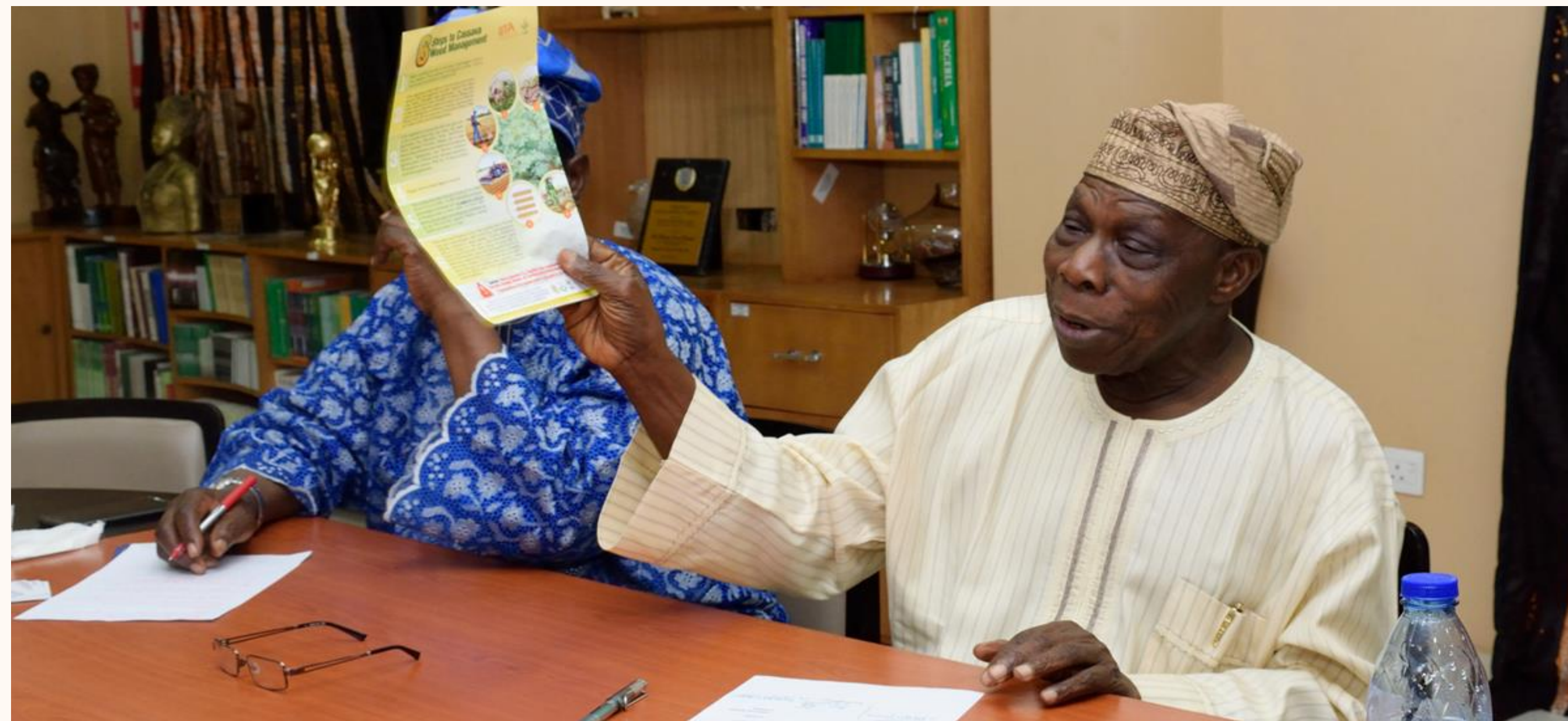


Table 4. Partnership with Former Nigeria's President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo to promote the 'Six Steps' toolkit and deregister Paraquat

Government domain

Here the project is working with the government to ensure the sustainability of the project results by incorporating the Six Steps to Cassava Weed Management & Best Planting Practices in their programs. In 2018, 14 state commissioners of agriculture through a communique commended the Cassava Weed Management project for developing the Six Steps to Cassava Weed Management & Best Planting Practices toolkit.

Conclusion

At the end of the project, we had reached the following number of farmers through print materials, 126,530; farmer training/farmer-to-farmer diffusion 72,663; and digital media, 221,757.



Fig. 5: Farmers reached through different channels.

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