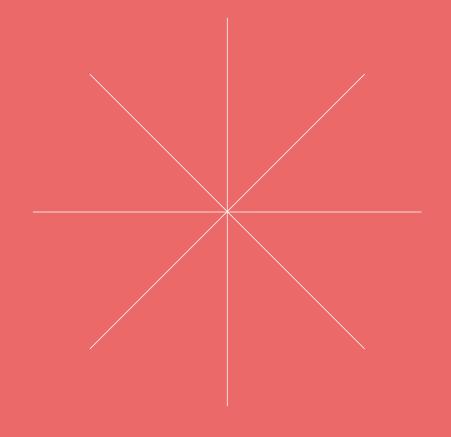
## FACILITATING MULTISTAKEHOLDER SOCIAL INNOVATION PROCESSES Key learnings from *lab of tomorrow* 14: towards a circular food system in Rwanda





Competence Center for Social Innovation (CSI-HSG) University of St. Gallen Switzerland

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EDITORIAL

The last three years have been quite a ride. In 2019, we formally launched the Competence Center for Social Innovation at the University of St. Gallen (CSI-HSG) with the goal of contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at an accelerated pace. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is a co-funder of CSI-HSG and jointly initiating the first edition of a *lab of tomorrow (lot*) for the Swiss development context has been a key focus of our collaboration.

Our *lot* 14 — towards a circular food system in Rwanda — was launched as a true co-creation project in the spirit of SDG 17 (Partnerships for the goals). As expected for a pilot, some things worked really well but we also experienced a few bumps along the way. Highlights included getting the commitment of key partners such as Nestlé or Hirschmann Stiftung in the beginning of the process, conducting a successful hybrid innovation sprint during the COVID-19 pandemic and seeing the impressive progress of the three teams after the incubation. At the same time, we saw challenges such as missing ownership by key stakeholders of the process and uncertainty around the type and scale of impact we were aiming for and could possibly achieve. Finally, we also had to come to terms with the amount of time and financial resources required for multistakeholder processes — which were more than we had planned for.

While we consider *lot* 14 an overall success, we distilled many learnings over the past few months and there are certainly things we will do differently next time. We are sharing these learnings here in the spirit of co-creation and SDG 17. We hope that they prove useful for people and organizations attempting to implement similar processes and will help them anticipate some of the challenges we faced. In particular, we identified these six success factors:

- (1) build and maintain a participatory infrastructure,
- (2) focus on good facilitation and learning,

(3) steering for impact,

- (4) craft an actionable challenge,
- (5) design a fruitful space for co-creation.
- (6) provide a supportive learning environment for incubation.

We see this report as a living document that will grow as we acquire additional learnings from future processes.

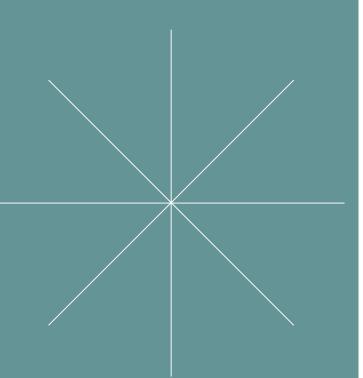
We would like to thank all our partners for their engagement and support throughout this journey! It has been a great experience to collaborate for more impact and jointly creating new learnings and insights.

If you are planning a multistakeholder social innovation process we are happy to discuss our learnings in more depth. Let's explore how we could collaborate in future processes!

Rahel Meyer and Tobias Fehr-Bosshard Competence Center for Social Innovation (CSI-HSG)

FACILITATING MULTISTAKEHOLDER SOCIAL INNOVATION PROCESSES

## SDG 17: PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Our biggest challenges can only be solved with collaboration and co-creation across people, organizations and sectors.

Climate change, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, poverty, and various forms of inequality are just a few of the global challenges we are facing today. In 2015, the United Nations member states adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to address these grand challenges. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs<sup>1</sup>) signify a paradigm shift — from development aid from the rich to the poor to a universal reference framework in which industrialized and developing countries, civil society and the private sector are held equally responsible for achieving sustainable development.

Seven years into the SDG era we see little change in the broad trajectories. According to the IPCC<sup>2</sup> we have less than a decade left to reduce our global greenhouse gas emissions by 45 percent, limit global warming to 1.5°C, and maintain an inhabitable planet earth. Similarly, the latest update on the planetary boundaries by Johan Rockström and the Stockholm Resilience Centre indicates that 6 out of 9 planetary boundaries are already in the danger zone beyond a safe operating space for humanity<sup>3</sup>. Our crises are more urgent than ever and so is our need to take action.

Grand challenges are complex, uncertain and cut across jurisdictional boundaries<sup>4</sup>. They cannot be solved by one individual, organization or sector alone. Thus, we need collaboration across people, organizations and sectors. SDG 17 — partnerships for the goals — emphasizes the importance of partnerships to contribute to the first sixteen goals. Joint solutions to address these challenges need to be systemic, impact-oriented as well as based on the needs of those affected. Developing and implementing such solutions in turn requires collaborative innovation processes that guide and support the involved actors in their journeys. Bringing together various stakeholders with diverse perspectives and different resources enhances the potential for innovative ideas and solutions - and chances of successful implementation leading to meaningful impact.

At the same time, grand challenges are "wicked problems" that do not have a neat and complete definition nor solution and where actions taken might indeed have unintended consequences<sup>5</sup>. This in combination with different priorities across disparate stakeholders makes managing and facilitating multistakeholder social

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innovation processes itself a challenge. With the need to take action in mind, we suggest understanding multistakeholder social innovation processes as opportunities for collaborative experimentation, learning and iteration in the face of uncertainty.

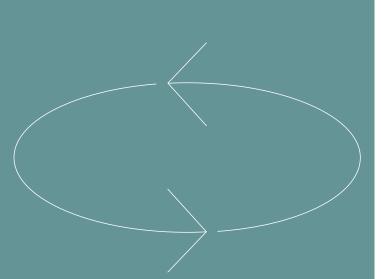
Processes such as the *lab of tomorrow* have a significant potential for spurring transformation by bringing together organizations and people with different backgrounds, resources, and expertise and enabling them to jointly create and implement solutions to address the grand challenges of our time while developing shared capacities for driving change.



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FACILITATING MULTISTAKEHOLDER SOCIAL INNOVATION PROCESSES

## THEORY OF CHANGE: HOW MULTISTAKEHOLDER SOCIAL INNOVATION PROCESSES CREATE IMPACT



Our theory of change illustrates how we believe multistakeholder social innovation processes — such as the *lab of tomorrow* — can contribute to sustainable development and generate long-lasting positive impact on global challenges in specific contexts.

Our theory of change (see visualization on p. 8) links activities to outputs to outcomes to impact. We differentiate between two groups of activities: process hosting and solution development. The activities of solution development are wellknown in innovation and revolve around understanding the problem space surrounding the challenge addressed, innovating new solutions based on that understanding, and then improving the chances that the new solutions are implemented through appropriate incubation. Solution development is embedded in broader activities of process hosting. These process-related activities are equally important when it comes to the overall impact of a multistakeholder social innovation process. Process hosting is comprised of three interlinked key activities. First, building a participatory infrastructure ensures that the stakeholders in the process develop a sense of ownership and drive for co-creation. Second, facilitation and learning ensure a focus on state-of-the-art tools and methods applied in the appropriate situations and ongoing reflection and documentation of learnings from the process.

And third, steering for impact anchors the process in the broader goal of creating a positive impact in the world. It further helps prioritizing activities in an agile project and track or measure the effects of the activities combined. Both groups of activities interact in an iterative rather than in a linear way.

The immediate outputs resulting from these activities are diverse, and include new solutions derived from co-creation, or active partnerships as a result of financial and non-financial support. Outcomes refer to the changes that result from activities and outputs. These outcomes occur at the ecosystem-, organizational- as well as people-level. Raised awareness of the challenge addressed is an example of positive change at ecosystem-level, while at organizational-level an outcome could be strengthened collaboration capabilities of an organization. At the people-level, improved personal skills and capabilities are examples of positive outcomes. These outcomes will ideally generate positive and lasting impact to society and the natural environment.

Evaluating the effects of multistakeholder social innovation processes is important. First, systematic evaluation encourages the upfront development of indicators of what should change for the better for people and the planet through the process. Second, ongoing evaluation and tracking of indicators help validate the theory of change and provide opportunities for learning and improving future processes. And third, evaluation results help provide clarity to involved stakeholders about the extent to which their investments (time, energy, money) have been justified and their goals achieved.

However, impact is generally difficult to measure and particularly challenging in multistakeholder social innovation processes. There is a time lag between innovation processes taking place and the potential impacts occurring. Therefore, there is an uncertainty about the investment-to-impact ratio for multiple years. Furthermore, due to the systemic ("wicked") nature of the challenges addressed and the potential impact occurring at individual-, organizational- and ecosystem-level, both attribution and definition of measurable indicators for impact is difficult.

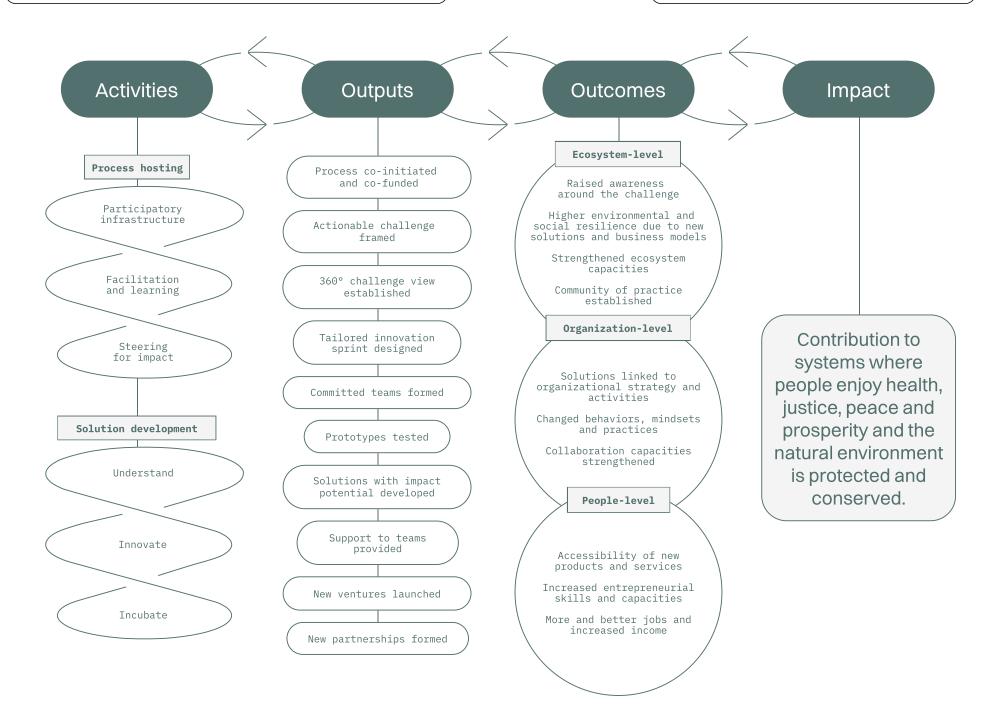
Despite these measurement challenges, defining desired outcomes and impacts (including pragmatic indicators) should take place at the start of social innovation processes and involve all key stakeholders. A theory of change is a helpful tool for facilitating discussion, and identifying potential gaps and areas of mismatched assumptions. Looking more systematically at the different kinds of "productive interactions"<sup>6</sup> that occur between different stakeholders in a social innovation process can serve as one set of indicators for the impact and success of the process. Clear goals and ambitions in combination with awareness of the practical challenges of impact measurement should facilitate a spirit of collaborative action and learning for impact.



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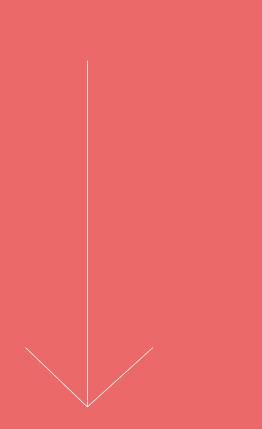
THEORY OF CHANGE: HOW MULTISTAKEHOLDER SOCIAL INNOVATION PROCESSES CREATE IMPACT

FACILITATING MULTISTAKEHOLDER SOCIAL INNOVATION PROCESSES



FACILITATING MULTISTAKEHOLDER SOCIAL INNOVATION PROCESSES

## THE CASE: lab of tomorrow 14



The *lab of tomorrow* (*lot*) is a multistakeholder social innovation process aimed at developing entrepreneurial solutions for global challenges. It provides a framework for impact-driven business activities and cross-sector partnerships.

By bringing together people with different backgrounds and expertise to jointly create new solutions for the grand challenges of our time, the *lot* has significant potential for transformation. The aim is to foster co-creation and implementation of social innovations that contribute to the SDGs and to systemic change.

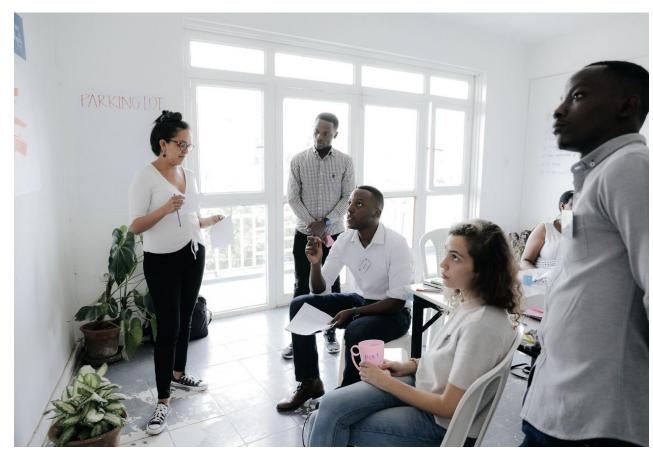
The *lot* is a comprehensive process (see <u>visualization on p. 11</u>) that has a multistakeholder innovation sprint at its core. The sprint serves as a catalyst for developing and testing new solutions. The process can be divided into three phases: understand, innovate and incubate. From a project management perspective, there is a fourth, preliminary phase: initiation. This initiation phase serves to evaluate potential partners, define a rough overall challenge as well as a country focus. Depending on the setup, this phase may also involve fundraising or identifying local partners.

The first phase of the *lot* process aims at understanding the development challenge in depth. This includes framing and identifying sub-challenges in collaboration with selected key stakeholders from the private and public sector as well as academia and civil society. To gather insights about the context, causes and effects of the challenge and understand the needs and wants of those affected by it, desk and field research are conducted. The research provides a common knowledge base for the participants of the innovation sprint.

The second phase is a 4- to 5-days innovation sprint, based on design thinking. It includes the process steps problem framing and understanding, ideation, prototyping, field testing as well as developing first sketches of sustainable business or partnership models. The sprint focuses on the needs of the target groups and the priorities of the involved stakeholders and aims at developing and testing solutions in an iterative approach together with relevant stakeholders and representatives from the target groups. With the help of a design thinking coach, each team — comprised of people from different sectors and backgrounds — co-creates new solutions for a specific sub-challenge during the sprint.

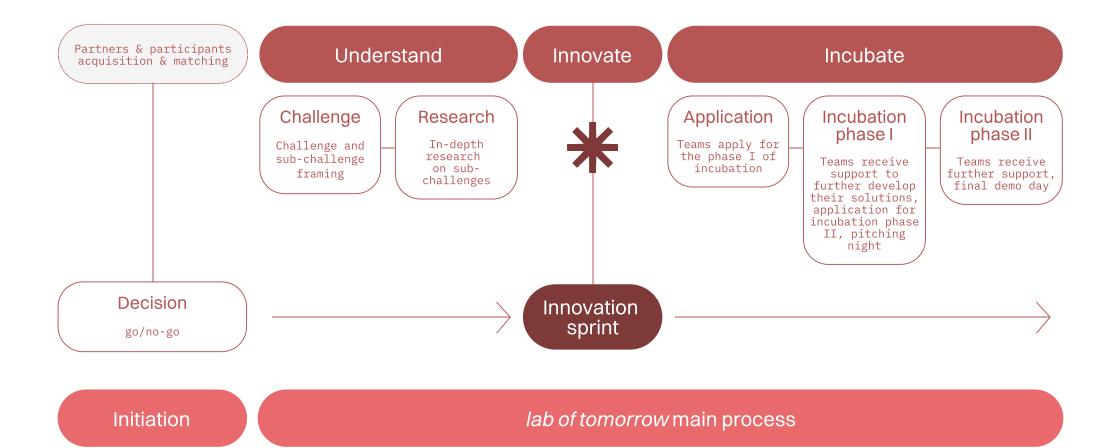
Promising ideas receive coaching and additional support to validate and further develop the solutions in the third phase: incubate. The aim of this phase is the testing and refining of the teams' partnership and/or business models, implementing them and/or going to market. In the first incubation phase, teams receive financial as well as non-financial support such as (bi-weekly/individual) coaching, access to experts, and training modules. Teams can apply for a second incubation phase and subsequently pitch their solutions to a jury. The most promising teams will be invited to participate in the second incubation phase, receiving further coaching, expert, and financial support to develop advanced prototypes, build capacity, implement the solutions and go to market. At the end of the lot process, the venture teams or partnerships are in a strong position to scale up their solutions and business models on their own and create impact.

The lot format was developed by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of the Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ) and has a proven track record of 17 currently running or completed processes and over 50 business model sketches created, many of them implemented. With lab of tomorrow 14, CSI-HSG co-initiated the first edition of the lot for the Swiss development context in cooperation with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). GIZ was a crucial supporter and sparring partner during implementation.



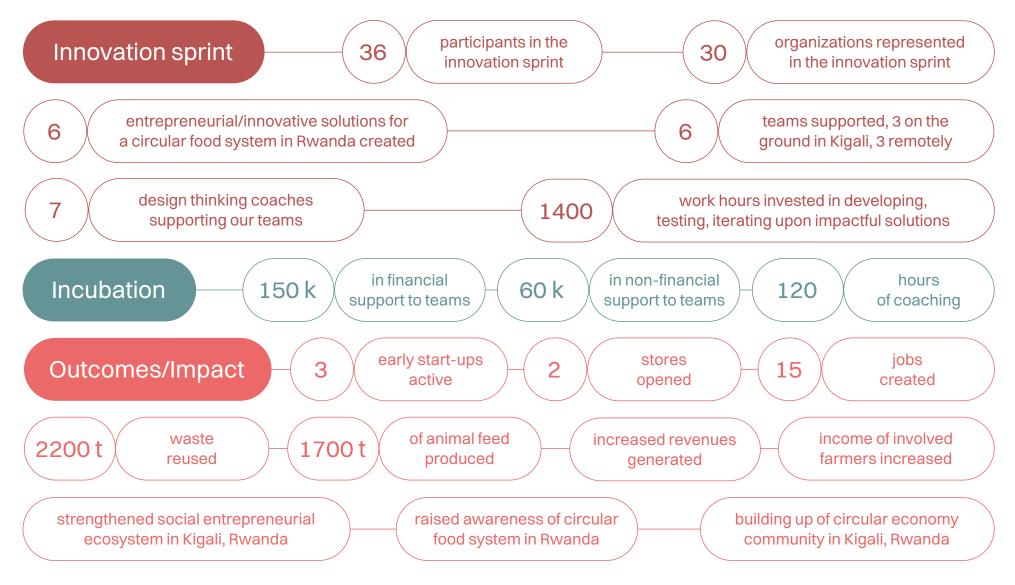
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#### LAB OF TOMORROW PROCESS



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#### FACTS & FIGURES ABOUT LOT 14



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## INTERVIEWS WITH THE 3 VENTURE TEAMS

3 QUESTIONS TO AIMABLE FROM FUTURE FARMS



<sup>©</sup> CSI-HSG

# What challenge is your team addressing and what solutions have you developed?

Every day, hundreds of tons of organic waste are generated in the City of Kigali. Currently, there is no sustainable way of converting this waste into something of value. Most waste goes to landfill which creates pressure on land usage, including greenhouse gas emissions, and has a negative impact on public health. We are developing a locally manufactured composting system that transforms municipal organic waste into quality organic fertilizer for smallholder farmers. Our system speeds up the composting process turning 500-1000 kilograms of organic waste into organic fertilizer every day. Because of its small size it can be used directly on site, thereby, reducing transportation costs and pollution — a big challenge when it comes to waste collection and management in Kigali.

Future Farms is developing a locally manufactured composting system to transform the municipal organic waste into quality organic fertilizer for smallholder farmers. To date, Future Farms has successfully tested and further improved their composting system and employs 4 people.

# What were your main struggles over the last two years?

A challenge we faced as a team was letting go of our initial idea and developing a solution that is required but at the same time financially sustainable. After visiting farmers and composters from different parts of the country, our idea was to develop an Innovation Lab where different people can come and develop their own solutions. We realized it would be difficult to generate funds and be financially sustainable with that model. That's why we decided to focus on just one component of that solution, the composting system that can generate revenues in two ways. First, from the produced organic compost, and second from selling the technology itself.

# What were your most rewarding experiences over the last two years?

One of the best things that happened was that we have been able to develop the composting system locally here at the Integrated Polytechnic Regional Centre (IPRC) in Kigali. Initially, we wanted to import a composting system and use it as a sample to develop our own. But then we realized that these systems are very expensive. Therefore, we decided to just develop it ourselves from design to the final product and work with a local manufacturer. Something we would have never thought to be possible in the beginning.

### INTERVIEWS WITH THE 3 VENTURE TEAMS

3 QUESTIONS TO OLEXA & KELVIN FROM FOODLINX



© CSI-HSG

FoodlinX establishes stores in Kigali offering highquality, fresh and organic fruits and vegetables at an affordable price directly sourced from smallholder farmers under fair trade terms. To date, FoodlinX opened their first store with delivery services, employs 3 people and works directly with 10 local farmers.

# What challenge is your team addressing and what solutions have you developed?

Smallholder farmers in Rwanda face the challenge of market accessibility. They are often dependent on middlemen who buy their agricultural produce at very low prices and sell it at much higher prices. Hence, they are reducing farmers' revenues and increasing prices for urban consumers. To solve this problem, we have opened a store where we sell products directly sourced from farmers to urban dwellers. We are connecting smallholder farmers directly with the market, paying fair prices and therefore improving their livelihood. At the same time, we are making it easier for urban dwellers to get access to healthy and nutritious food at affordable prices, another challenge in Kigali.

#### Where do you see your venture in 10 years?

The stores are just the beginning. Initially, our aim was to have 20 stores, with 10 stores in Kigali and 10 more in other cities, getting supplies from farmers and being the place for fresh food. However, in the meantime we have realized that we can expand our services and create additional value, for example by creating branded products. Therefore in 10 years, FoodlinX will be a complete agri-business, providing full support to smallholder farmers by purchasing and storing their products or helping them create their own niche brands.

#### How did you experience the last two years?

We did not know each other before and met for the first time online for the innovation sprint. Despite some struggles in the beginning due to the virtual setup, we managed to come up with a great business idea in just one week. So, seeing our pilot store come to life now and being able to work so well together as a team, was one of the most rewarding experiences. This is the first time for us to run a business at a scalable level together with a team. So from our individual perspectives, we have also been able to grow a lot.

#### INTERVIEWS WITH THE 3 VENTURE TEAMS

3 QUESTIONS TO THEONESTE FROM AGRICULTURAL GURUS



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Agricultural Gurus produces high-quality, affordable feed mix for pigs and chicken by using agricultural residues (wastes) and industrial food waste. To date, Agricultural Gurus produces around 10 tonnes of animal feed per day, has created 8 jobs and opened a store to sell their product.

# What challenge is your team addressing and what solutions have you developed?

A balanced feed mix for pigs and chicken is very expensive in Rwanda. Small livestock farmers cannot afford this, leading to an unbalanced diet or even death of their animals. In contrast, there is a huge amount of unused protein-rich waste from maize production including corncobs or maize bran. We came up with the Agricultural Gurus product, a high-quality and affordable animal feed made from maize by-products as the main raw materials, mixed with other waste like cabbage. With our feed we reduce agricultural waste, usually ending in landfill, and help farmers increase their livestock productivity and their income.

# What were your main struggles in the last two years?

Gaining trust from our customers has been our main challenge. Because this product is new to the market and people are skeptical of the feed containing "waste" at first and need to be made aware of its value. Furthermore, getting access to literal tons of raw materials like corn cobs was quite challenging in the beginning, because our aim is to serve a high number of farmers. Another challenge concerns the certification of our product, as the process here in Rwanda is very complicated and expensive. The support from an expert provided by the *lab of tomorrow* program helped us to address this challenge.

#### Where do you see your venture in 10 years?

We want to challenge the animal feeds production industry. We want to be one of the main producers of animal feeds in the country within the next five to ten years and have a positive impact on the whole agricultural sector in Rwanda. Our aim is to be inclusive, by targeting smallholder farmers as they are the main producers of our raw materials, encouraging them to plant what we need, and in return selling them our product at a lower price. This will help us attract more clients on one side and provide additional income for farmers on the other side; a win-win situation.

#### **VOICES FROM PARTNERS**



entrepreneurship and green growth, climate resilience and circular economy.»

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#### **RELEVANCE OF LOT 14 FOR RWANDA**

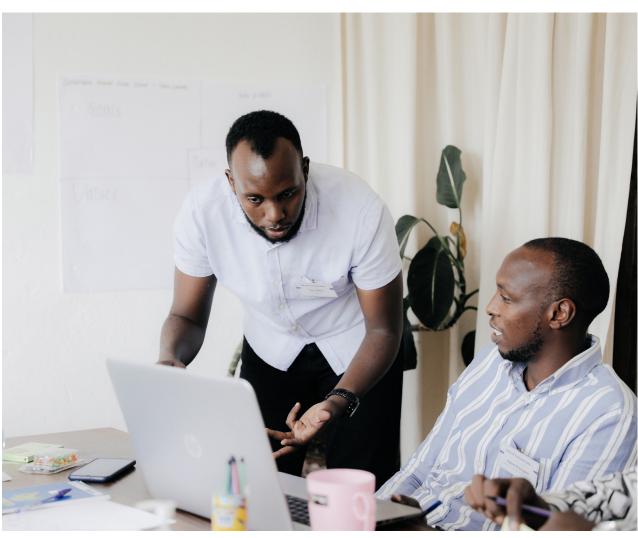
#### INTERVIEW WITH CARES MANZI, MANAGING DIRECTOR, IMPACT HUB KIGALI

# How did Impact Hub Kigali contribute to the *lot* 14? What was your role and what has changed for you as an organization thanks to the *lot* 14?

The Impact Hub Kigali was part of the project as an implementing partner. That means we were the partner "on the ground" and were part of the core team throughout the whole project. It started with collaborative research with students from the University of St. Gallen, followed by discussions with local stakeholders interested in circular food systems. We then co-facilitated a sub-challenge framing workshop with potential partners, conducted field research here in Rwanda and co-designed and delivered the innovation sprint together with CSI-HSG and reverse studio. After the sprint we supported and coached the teams to further develop their solutions. It was a unique opportunity for us to witness and participate in the overall process of the lot, to follow and learn from the development of the solutions, and to provide full support to the teams that were in the incubation phase. This helped us to evolve and improve our position in the ecosystem.

# What positive impact on the ecosystem has been created due to the *lot* 14 process?

A significant part of the impact is generated through the three solutions that have been developed and deployed. These solutions solve real challenges of the food system in Rwanda. I think it was truly necessary to go through this process to



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«We can already feel the ecosystem beginning to evolve, and we believe the *lot* has sparked conversations about circular economy and circular food systems in Rwanda.»

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understand these issues, engage different stakeholders from different backgrounds, and then work collaboratively to create and implement these solutions. That's the impact that this process can have, and it has obviously been effective.

Through the involvement of several different local stakeholders such as the City of Kigali, companies, students and entrepreneurs, the lot raised awareness about the necessity of circular food systems. Although, there are some attempts and initiatives to address circular economy in Rwanda, the topic has not gained traction yet and there is a huge untapped potential for advancing businesses for circular food systems. We are now in the process of building communities of practice at the Impact Hub Kigali, leveraging the momentum of the lot, and try to raise awareness about circular economy as a general topic. We can already feel the ecosystem beginning to evolve, and we believe the lot has sparked conversations about circular economy and circular food systems in Rwanda. It was the first project on this topic to happen in this ecosystem. Furthermore, the lot has strengthened the social entrepreneurial ecosystem in Kigali by providing space for co-creation and knowledge exchange, as well as access to financial resources, coaching and an expert pool.

#### What potential do you see for multistakeholder innovation formats such as the *lot* in general and specifically for Rwanda?

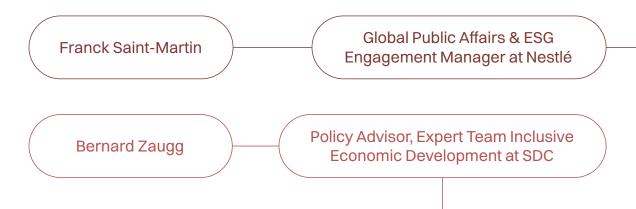
I see great potential for such processes. They help to create a 360° understanding of the challenges to be addressed. This is exactly the type of systematic research or needs finding combined with testing that is lacking in traditional entrepreneurship, and it really distinguishes the *lot* process from others. Throughout the journey, the problems are examined from multiple angles — I think that's essential and much needed in an ecosystem where complex problems are the reality. Specifically in Rwanda, all sectors face similar challenges for which solutions need to be created. These should be tackled with collaborative efforts between the different stakeholders.

#### Looking back at the last 2 years of our collaboration, what has your experience been like and what stood out the most? What are your plans and dreams for the future of Impact Hub Kigali?

It was the first time the Impact Hub Kigali was involved in such a journey and a very exciting experience for us. To be part of the process from the very beginning was very valuable. The innovation sprint was definitely a highlight, when all the stakeholders from different backgrounds were brought together and were guided through the design thinking process. During those days, everything fell into place and some great solutions were developed. The power of collaboration and co-creation became particularly evident then.

Our plan, dream and great hope is to offer more programs that have a great impact and are unique. We will try to use the knowledge that *lot* has given us to further develop ideas we have with the main goal of co-creating more impact!

#### **VOICES FROM PARTNERS**



«Having participated in the innovation sprint, I've been particularly impressed by the engagement of the 3 teams. They have developed what were very sketchy concepts back in June into promising operational activities. We have learned a lot from piloting the *lab of tomorrow* process as a new way to generate collaborations with the private sector and are excited to continue this journey.»

**Yves Burgener** 

Lead Design Thinking Coach, reverse AG

«lab of tomorrow 14 was an exciting cross-sector collaboration that helped us build new relationships and let new local initiatives emerge to foster a regenerative food system. We are convinced that partnering with others in this setup helps delivering a bigger impact to advance our Creating Shared Value strategy and to support the UN Sustainable Development Goals.»

«It is impressive to witness how much 'doing' resulted from this program. Especially because the participants brought such a comprehensive knowledge of agriculture and food systems and had an admirable attitude in solving problems.»

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## SUCCESS FACTORS

In our review of *lot* 14 we distilled 6 key success factors for facilitating multistakeholder social innovation processes. We distinguish between cross-cutting success factors that are relevant throughout the whole process and focal success factors that are crucial at specific points in time.

#### **CROSS-CUTTING SUCCESS FACTORS**

#### (1) BUILD AND MAINTAIN A PARTICIPATORY INFRASTRUCTURE

A successful multistakeholder social innovation process requires co-ownership for the process from as many key stakeholders as possible. We built a participatory infrastructure to strengthen co-ownership, by co-initiating, co-funding, co-developing and co-implementing the process. The lot 14 collaboration was a success in terms of co-initiation with SDC and co-funding with SDC, Nestlé, and Hirschmann Stiftung. To improve co-development in future processes we plan to have a more extensive initiation phase to align the priorities of the different key stakeholders for the process and the desired outcomes and impacts. We expect a more formalized agreement to translate into a deeper embedding of the developed solutions in the involved organizations and therefore a more impactful co-implementation.

# (2) FOCUS ON GOOD FACILITATION AND LEARNING

Taking action on wicked problems with multiple stakeholders requires good facilitation throughout the whole process. Based on our experience from lot 14 we strongly believe in co-creation and co-facilitation. We worked with the Swiss design agency reverse and Impact Hub Kigali from Rwanda. Our different experiences, perspectives and skills enhanced the design and facilitation of the overall process and facilitation. The embeddedness of Impact Hub Kigali in the local Rwandan ecosystem was crucial. Facilitating reflection and learning at every step of the process fosters capacity building of the involved stakeholders. In addition to retrospective reflections, in future processes we plan to interweave learning and reflection sessions more systematically throughout the whole process.

#### (3) STEERING FOR IMPACT

Facilitating multistakeholder social innovation processes can be a delicate balancing act between the goals and desires of individual stakeholders and the potential overall impact. Steering for impact ties the overall process back to the initially defined goals of the process that all key stakeholders agreed on. It provides guidance in the face of different ways of moving forward. For future processes we aim to be more specific and systematic about clearly formulating and capturing the outcome and impact goals. Despite the challenges of measuring outcomes and impacts, defining shared indicators for success is crucial.

#### FOCAL SUCCESS FACTORS

#### (4) CRAFT AN ACTIONABLE CHALLENGE THAT FITS THE NEEDS AND THE CONTEXT

The challenge to be addressed forms the starting point of every multistakeholder social innovation process and thus deserves special attention. Our experience shows that involving key stakeholders from the beginning of the process and making sure that the challenge is relevant to them is crucial to foster ownership and engagement of the stakeholders involved. Furthermore, we also observed that framing a challenge as a call to action encourages learning about the problem at hand and fosters the development of actionable solutions later in the process. Our local implementing partners conducted an extensive needs finding, exploring the causes and effects of the challenges addressed as well as the needs and wants of those affected by it. Investing time and resources to better understand the challenge or problem in depth — creating a kind of 360° challenge view — was key for the participants in the innovation sprint to be able to develop impactful solutions. In future processes, we will consider including participants of the innovation sprint already during the research on the challenges, as they have a deep knowledge of the relevant contexts.

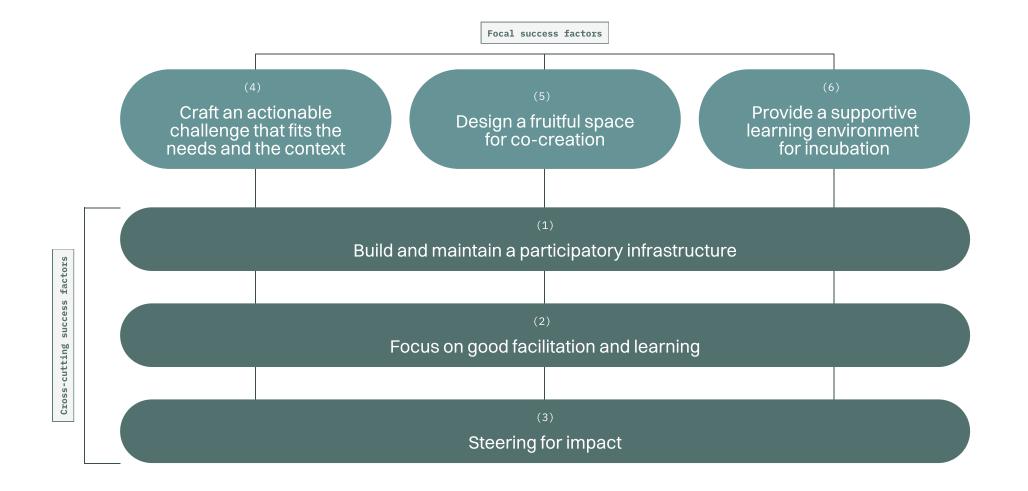
#### (5) DESIGN A FRUITFUL SPACE FOR CO-CREATION

The core of any innovation process is the co-creation of solutions. Designing a fruitful space and environment for collaborative activities and dialogue is therefore essential. During the innovation sprint, we made sure to provide an inspiring and safe space for participants to share their ideas and opinions and encourage collaboration. Designing the sprint based on design thinking method — with a deep focus on empathy and care for the people involved - allowed for effective team building and context and needs-specific solution development. Moreover, the teams greatly benefited from each having an experienced design thinking coach on their side, supporting and guiding them on their journey. We realized that teams should not just be composed of people with different perspectives and knowledge but should also be balanced in terms of different personalities and characteristics in order to avoid fundamental disagreements and foster constructive team spirit. At the same time, we tried to ensure a fitting team structure for the time after the innovation sprint. In particular, people with the available time capacities to further develop the solutions are needed. We had a hybrid setup where three teams collaborated in person in Kigali and three teams worked online. Both setups can work well and teams from both groups developed successful solutions. Nevertheless, in future processes we would choose either one or the other to strengthen the overall group cohesion and facilitate efficiency.

## (6) PROVIDE A SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR INCUBATION

Incubation allows teams — and individual team members - to grow and successfully implement their ideas and solutions. Each team was at a different level of maturity after the innovation sprint in terms of capacity and solution development. We provided both financial and non-financial support to the teams during the incubation phase to further develop, prototype, test, iterate and implement their solutions. The non-financial support was targeted at the specific needs of each team, including coaching, peer learning, specific expert support and trainings. We included the teams in co-creating these tailored support packages. This twofold customized incubation support strongly enhanced the capacities of the teams to develop impactful business models and helped them thrive.

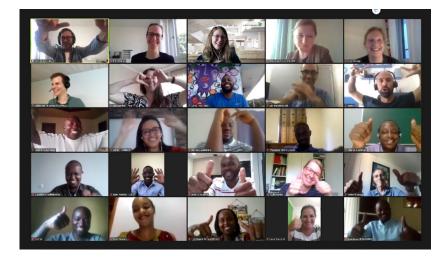
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#### THANKS TO

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  ür wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ)
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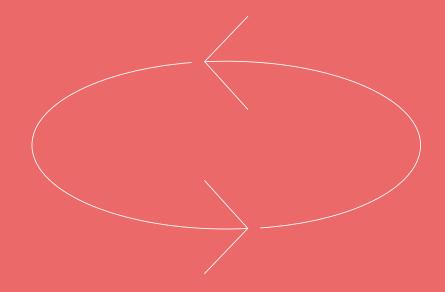
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Let's collaborate and share our learnings to leverage multistakeholder social innovation processes even more effectively in creating a more just, equitable, ecologically balanced and socially resilient world!



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