

Advocacy for better terms of inclusion: reducing road harassment by the police



1. Pioneer partnership

Between 2012 and 2018, Pсалtry International and 2SCALE were involved in an inclusive agribusiness partnership implemented in Oyo state from 2012-2018 in the southwest of Nigeria. Together, the partnership introduced this replicable practice of advocating for better terms of inclusion towards reducing road harassment by police and other government road wardens when transporting cassava from farm to factory. The practice was first introduced in 2014 in the first phase when farmers, transporters and cassava root aggregators complained of high transportation cost caused by the harassment in the form of illegal taxation they must pay to police and other road wardens when they are conveying cassava roots to Pсалtry's factory.

The overall ambition of the practice is to eliminate illegal taxation contributing to high cost of transportation for cassava roots which eats into farmer's margin by 15-30% in some cases. Policemen, road safety officials, local government revenue collection agents, and vehicle inspection officers (VIO) all contributed to this poor business disabling challenge. This required advocacy and alignment of unconventional value chain actors (the government agencies) to buy-into the inclusive business ambition of the champion Pсалtry, therefore improving efficiency.



2. Replicable practice

This replicable practice is addressing constraints in terms of eliminating illegal taxes on farmers' cassava root transportation cost and reducing the time spent at security checkpoints before they get the cassava roots to the factory. The delays at checkpoints have significant impact on root quality and price because harvested cassava is expected to be at the processing factory a maximum 12 hours after harvesting, otherwise it starts to deteriorate and build-up toxic levels of cyanides. The most common fees farmers pay the road wardens therefore reducing their margins are the following:

1. Paying beyond government approved rates for expired drivers or vehicle licences.
2. Paying unofficial taxes to police and other road wardens to pass through their checkpoints.
3. Paying multiple times for the same tax to revenue agents of the government as the trucks cross several local government areas (LGAs) within the same state conveying cassava roots from farm to factory.

The practice involves integrating the different government agencies into the governance structure of the partnership. During these meetings, these new actors learnt about the functioning of the value chain and understood the impact of their activities on the efficiency of the value chain. The actors agreed and implemented the following interventions:

1. All transporters registered their credentials with the factory, the factory in turn keeps track of the expiry dates and sometimes at a cost, facilitated the registration for the transporters licences when it expired.
2. The actors developed a sticker pasted on the trucks used for identifying actors in the value chain with buy-in of the relevant government agencies. This eliminated the delays at the check points, allowing roots to get to factory within the right time after harvest.
3. A communication line was set up between the core value chain actors and their new supporters to address issues beyond the governance committee platforms.

In summary, this practice is addressing constraints in terms of:

Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Voice: Farmers and transporters during the governance meeting organized by the partnership with the government departments were able voice out their challenge and participated in the development and implementation of solutions. In addition, the grassroots actors had access to the agencies directly to complain about defaulting officers.• Risks: The transportation of roots from farm to factory became more efficient with the use of those stickers and the governance meetings. Transporters were no longer paying illegal charges and root quality was not compromised.• Rewards: Transportation cost no longer impacted the margin of the farmers and transporters became better integrated in the partnership getting more business and improved income as they registered with the champion.
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3. Preconditions for replication

The following conditions are necessary for this replicable practice to succeed:

1. The supply chain from the farms to the factory must be well structured and business relationship strong in terms of pricing, payment schedule and process and, understanding the expectations of both actors. Otherwise the transporters and the new actors will take advantage of this and continue to do business as usual.
2. Establish the governance committee of the partnership and ensure the meeting occurs as agreed. Using this platform, the partnership can integrate local police, VIO, and revenue collection units into the governance committee and invite them to occasionally attend the meetings.
3. An organized transportation union motivated businesswise to work in the value chain. The transportation union must have road worthy vehicles and have valid papers (licences).
4. A functioning farmers' organization or cooperative must exist to connect transporters to the factory. The transporters onboarded and registered with the value chain must see the business case, which is linked to this organized farmers' cooperatives supply the champion is planned manner.

4. Results Achieved

- Extended the shelf life of onions from 3 months to as long as 6 months.
- Reduced post-harvest losses from 50% to 20%.
- Trained 40 youths (five per cluster) youth who are offering advisory services to farmers in post-harvest management and construction of new SIM structures.

Want to know more?

To know more about this practice, please reach out to Otitoju Oluwatoyin Modupe, motitoju@2scale.org 2SCALE Cassava Partnership Facilitator

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