



# EXPLORING THE DISPARITIES BETWEEN SMALLHOLDER FARMER PRACTICE AND POTENTIAL

A one-day workshop presented by the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Assets and Market Access

November 3rd, 2016 in Washington, D.C. The Ronald Reagan Building, Polaris Room

Agricultural research aimed at developing countries has typically focused on advancing the technological frontier: developing new tools, fertilizers, and hybrid seeds that increase crop yields, and ultimately, resiliency in the face of climate variability. However, the fact that average small farm yields consistently fall well below what is technically possible indicates that the benefits from these new innovations are not being realized by farmers.

To "Mind the Gap" means better understanding these roadblocks that stop farmers from adopting new innovations, even when they are locally available, and working to design interventions to close yield gaps, increase productivity, and secure more sustainable livelihoods - ultimately paving the way out of poverty.

This workshop will provide a dynamic opportunity for participants and attendees to share findings from research and explore the potential for integrating salient ideas from these findings into development programming. The participants and audience members are thought leaders, technical experts and program designers interested in improving the efficacy of efforts to scale agricultural technologies to advance food security around the world.

This workshop will highlight three categories of farmerlevel constraints to the adoption of new technologies that our research has identified, and, through discussion, lay out potential strategies and interventions to reduce the yield gap by overcoming these barriers. The categories are:

# 1. Risk and Liquidity

Farmers are often hesitant to adopt beneficial technologies because they are seen as prohibitive income and production gambles. New financial instruments like index insurance and other support systems such as improved credit access are helping to mitigate these un-hedged risks, allowing farmers to take on prudent risk and invest more securely in their futures.

### 2. Beliefs and Behavior

Behavioral factors significantly constrain farmers' acceptance of new technologies. Effective mechanisms are being tested to improve smallholder farmer knowledge and decisionmaking about the acquisition and deployment of advanced technologies. Research into the role social networks can play in increasing technology adoption is also proving very promising.

## 3. Profitability

The yield gap can be particularly immovable when available technologies do not actually benefit farmers. Poor soil, lack of access to markets and unprofitable input prices, all hinder a farmer's ability to sustainably improve food and wealth security. Tailoring technologies to take into consideration agro-ecological differences enables them to more successfully scale in different conditions. Adapting new mechanisms for smallholders to collectively capture economies of scale, to navigate local commercial systems and to remain a part of the value chain will help to relax constraints and allow the yield gap to close further.





# **Agenda**

TIME	TOPIC	PRESENTERS
8:30am-9am	Registration and continental breakfast (Polaris Foyer)	
9:00 am-9:30	Brief introduction about FEED the FUTURE, USAID, AMA Innovation Lab (BASIS), the workshop, and an explanation of "MIND THE GAP" (Polaris Room)	Beth Dunford, USAID Michael Carter, UC Davis
9:30am-10:15	The first of the three 30 minute "synthetic" talks on a highlighted workshop topic (Polaris Room)	RISK AND LIQUIDITY Chris Udry, Yale
10:15am-10:30	Coffee break	
10:30am-12pm	The second and third of the three "synthetic" talks (Polaris Room)	<b>BELIEFS AND BEHAVIOR</b> Andrew Dillon, Michigan State
		PROFITABILITY Chris Barrett, Cornell
12pm-1:30	Lunch break (Polaris Room)	
1:30pm-3:30	Concurrent Working Sessions: Break into 3 groups based on the highlighted topics.  • AMA Innovation Lab researchers as co-	RISK AND LIQUIDITY (Meridian D & E) Chris Udry, Yale Lauren Hendricks, Grameen
1:30pm-3:30	Break into 3 groups based on the highlighted topics.	<b>D &amp; E)</b> Chris Udry, Yale
1:30pm-3:30 3:30pm-4	<ul> <li>AMA Innovation Lab researchers as comoderators with 1-2 policy and programming experts.</li> <li>Each person will be allotted 20 minutes for presentation.</li> <li>The remaining time should allow ample</li> </ul>	D & E) Chris Udry, Yale Lauren Hendricks, Grameen Foundation  BELIEFS AND BEHAVIOR (Polaris room) Andrew Dillon, Michigan State Emily Hillenbrand & Salome

Join the conversation on Twitter: @AMAInnovLab #yieldgapconference



For more information about this event, email Sophie Javers: sejavers@ucdavis.edu



The Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Assets and Market Access at UC Davis is a virtual institute of researchers from around the globe that identifies and supports innovative agricultural economic research and promotes those projects that empower the vulnerable to sustainably rise up out of poverty. Through a pioneering toolbox of financial, behavioral, and informational innovations, the AMA Innovation Lab strives to better understand the roadblocks that stop farmers from adopting new innovations and works to design interventions that close yield gaps, increase productivity and secure more sustainable livelihoods. The program also sponsored policy-oriented outreach activities that integrate research findings into a coherent and effective voice about policy and programming priorities. Learn more at basis.ucdavis.edu.