This presentation is part of the

Agriculture and Nutrition Global Learning and Evidence Exchange (N-GLEE)

held in Kampala, Uganda from December 10-12, 2012.

For additional presentations and related event materials, visit: http://spring-nutrition.org/nglee-africa
Diversification: A Key Strategy for Better Ag and Nutritional Outcomes

Paul Sommers
Who am I?

Field Practitioner

• Degrees in both agriculture and nutrition
• Managed field programs (LTTA)
• STTA on ag/nut linkages all over the world
• Written several how to manuals for ag and nutrition field staff
What is going on here?
Key Messages

1) Diversity- foundation of HH resilience (understand the existing structure and function) Why?

2) Simplification of ag. landscape-simplification of diet (Development is about presenting options/ check with nutritionists first) Why?

3) Introduction of (1) a new crop/livestock and or (2) production methods with existing crops must be done in the context of preserving diversity (full disclosure/do no harm to resilience) Why?
Key Messages

• Indigenous crop diversity is designed to ensure flexibility, dietary diversity and income diversity.

• Indigenous farming systems aim for optimizing output per square meter and are multi dimensional (+ resilience)

• Commercial monocrop systems emphasize maximum output per plant and are primarily one dimensional (resilience?).
#1 Diversity- foundation of resilience

- Total return more important
- Natural landscape are mixtures of diversity. Build soil health to support life. Prevent erosion, leaf litter, soil moisture.
- Diverse ag. landscape structures mimic natural landscape structure-
- Income- fluid and dynamic. Value created in different parts of plants.
Key messages

• Culture trumps everything else.
• Identify foods with stories. Foods that heal. (i.e. pumpkin in Haiti)
• Role of tradition and food choices. Soda and snack foods? (where is the mother in law?)
• Target is very narrow- 1000 days not whole community. Dietary needs can be met through home compound garden.
• Start with their food base they know and have. FFPN red flesh banana, pumpkin, OFSP, leaves.
Diversity: Complement/conflict

• Complement. Already in practice

Diverse cropping structure allows for determining function according to demand. Opportunity to sell specific crop- then buy what is needed.

Conflict- potential market opportunity. Too much on one crop planted without preserving the diversity that is essential for food security resilience.