SOIL TESTING FOR SMALLHOLDERS
HOW AND WHEN TO PROMOTE UPTAKE, ADOPTION AND REFERRAL OF SOIL TESTING SERVICES

1. Leverage interest triggers for behaviour change
   Loss framing messaging triggers farmers to uptake. Understanding these triggers is key to drive adoption.
   “Avoid unnecessary losses on your season harvest, take a soil test to learn the ideal fertilizer quantities”
   Bundle soil testing with services and products so the perception of cost versus value can be reduced.

2. Human Touch to increase adoption and referrals up to 2 to 4 times respectively
   Persistent agent engagement promises success in adoption and recommendation adherence
   Timing the soil test before the planting season increases the probability of farmers testing the soil implementing the “salient” recommendations.

3. Boost farmer engagement through leveraging collective action and social structures / institutions
   Aggregate farmers into groups to organize financing and soil testing scheduling.

4. Strategically time farmer engagement with planting period
   Schedule recommendations via SMS / DVAs reminders and records to influence purchase at timely periods
   3.3X recommendations adherence when human touch is focused post test

5. Employ flexible pricing strategies and comprehensive service offerings
   >70% of farmers were willing to pay out of their harvest income and savings.
   1,000 Kshs is considered fair price for soil testing by all the farmers (testers and non-testers). Non-payers were less likely to implement recommendations.
   No loans were preferred to be taken for soil testing.

6. The soil test is just part of the Smallholder’s Customer Journey
   Agent finds farmer Farmer finds agent
   Targeting farmer groups improves the cost efficiencies of the process and sensitization.

AgriFin Accelerate is a six-year initiative supported by the MasterCard Foundation, working in Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia. Read our complete report here.