SRI/SCI : Some policy-related issues

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Issue 1

SRI/SCI: an empirical origin

SRI/SCI: a confrontation between

science / theory–steered technologies
(the modern agriculture)

and

field-level (empirical) farming practices
(mobilising farmers' experiences)

The SRI / SCI package of practices as compared with conventional, *best* practices

SRI/SCI agro-ecological:

- very low seed rates
- very young transplants:
  8 to 15 days old
- single transplants/hill
- wide spacing:
  20x20 to 50x50 cm
- no flooding, moist soil
- compost
- 3 to 4 rounds rotary hoe

Modern, conv. (irrigated):

- high seed rates
- young transplants:
  about 21days; or older
- 3-5 transplants/hill
- narrow spacing:
  10x10 to 20x20 cm
- continuous flooding
- min. fertilizer + N topdr.
- 2 rounds rotary hoe / herbicide

Issue 2

Adaptation to local contexts

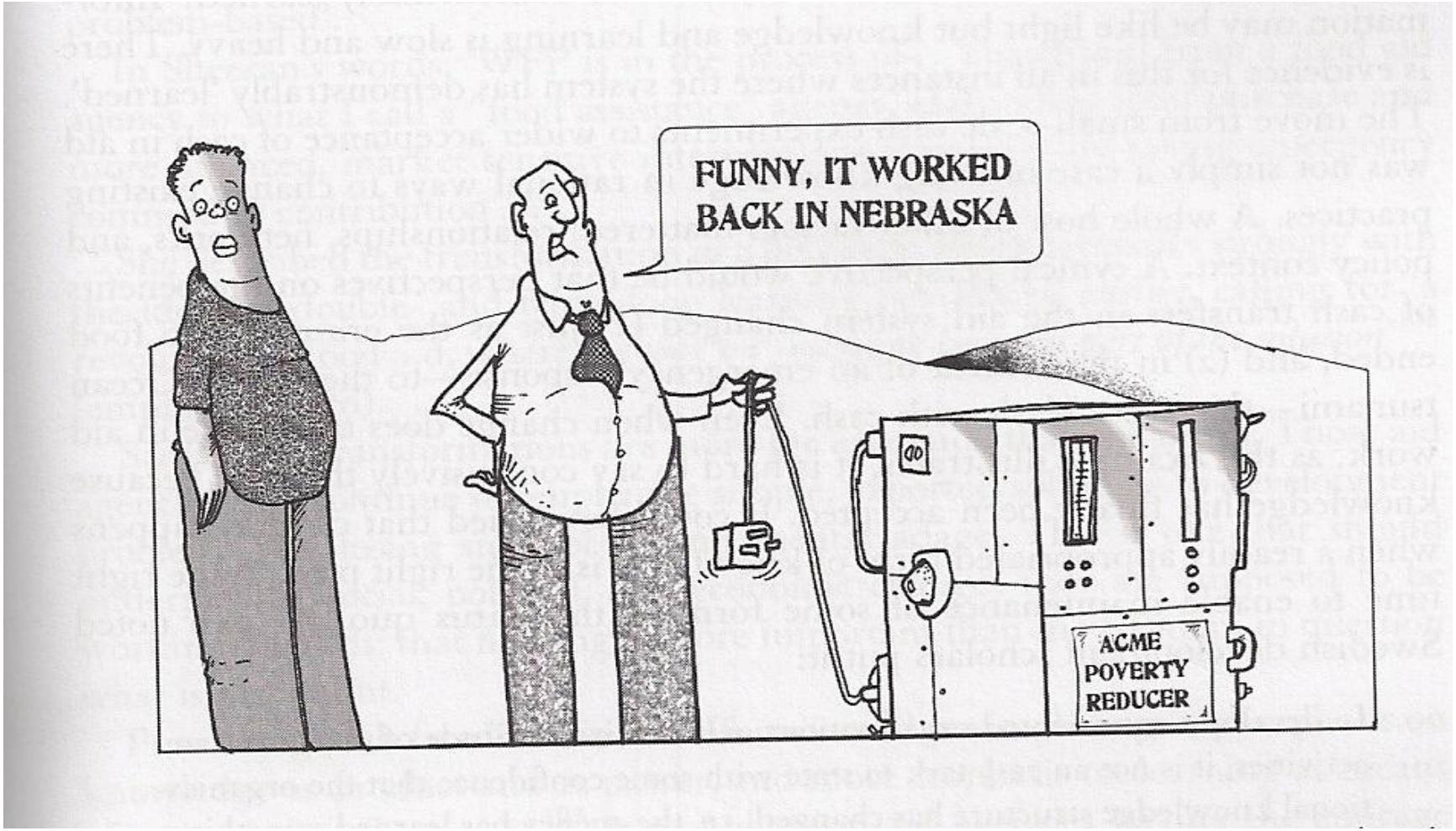
Same principles, different contexts, different (adapted) practices

Mechanized SRI transplanting, Tamil Nadu

Smallholder farming (Uttarakhand): small plots; limited water control

Silver bullett technology transfer

(Ramalingam, 2013)



Issue 3

Up-scaling of SRI/SCI; the need for a "learning" process

Technology transfer vs learning process

The "technology transfer" approach?

The participatory approach: actor consultations,

Issue 4

The *public-private partnerships*,

aiming for factory like efficiencies

Agricultural development dilemma

Policy preferences	Farming realities
• Concrete constraints/problems	• Diverse and variable communities and fields
• Simple/easy solutions	• Dynamic responses
• Technology transfer - -> linear process	• Actor consultation - - > improvisation / adaptation
• Everything under control !?	• Flexible response to uncertainties

Issue 5

Why the superiority of SRI/SCI?

High yields at reduced costs of external inputs (for seed rates, fertilizers and pesticides applications) under SRI/SCI leading to large efficiency gains

as compared with

Many modern farming practices increasingly recognised as inefficient: stunted individual plants (excessive seed rates) → stunted roots → poor uptake moisture and nutrients → dense leaf-canopy → poor utilization of solar radiation

A way forward

- Simple principles
- Simple explanations

- Farmer experimentation/Farmer Field Schools
- Farmer adaptation (- - - and adoption?)