

# FOOD 2030 NETWORKS CONFERENCE

## Transformative Food System Innovation

AREA 42, BRUSSELS 5 -7 March 2024



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# FOOD 2030 NETWORKS CONFERENCE

## MAKING A BUSINESS OUT OF FOOD SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION

### KEYNOTE

14:00 H

By Thom Achterbosch,  
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Wageningen University & Research  
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University & Research

FOOD 2030 Networks Conference on Transformative Food System Innovation, Day 2: Platform for innovators, Brussels, 6 March 2024



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# Making a business out of food systems transformation

Making it our business

Elisabeth O. Obeng and Thom Achterbosch





# A Researcher on the Road to Impact

Cowpea

West Africa is the biggest producer with **Nigeria** first in the world (3.6 million tons in 2021).

**Resilient:** drought tolerant, low input needs, nitrogen fixer

**Many varieties** with multiple appearances and tastes

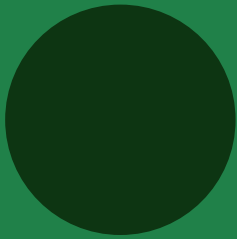


Nutritional  
values

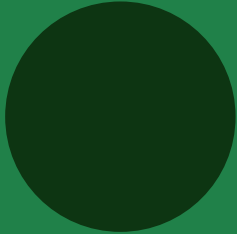
Protein, lipids,  
carbohydrates, vitamins,  
dietary fibers, and  
minerals

23% Protein  
60% carbohydrates  
10% fibers  
1% fat





**Female dominated business**

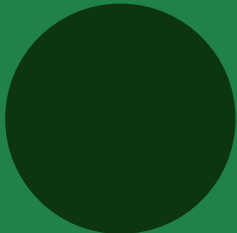


**Thickening Ability:** cakes and porridges, dumplings and local products like akara, moi-moi, etc.



The  
business

Target costumers: **middle-high class** (local dishes preparation)



Growing local **product development and innovation**  
knowledge





An African made protein  
alternative with International  
business potential

Suitable as a “Clean label  
alternative” in the EU market

*(High solubility and High  
foaming properties)*

Milk and Baked goods; to  
explore other products as well



The  
opportunity

# WHAT TRIGGERED THE JOURNEY FROM RESEARCH TO BUSINESS...

1. Feeling of unaccomplished impact as a researcher
2. Social impact:
  - Women empowerment
  - Local added value
3. Restlessness: “this does not work” vs “this can work!”
4. Making it personal:
  - Easy connection to “who I really am” as a person
  - Simple entrepreneurial drive



**... FILLING  
“THE GAPS”**

# Making a business out of food systems transformation

# The road from research results into

innovation

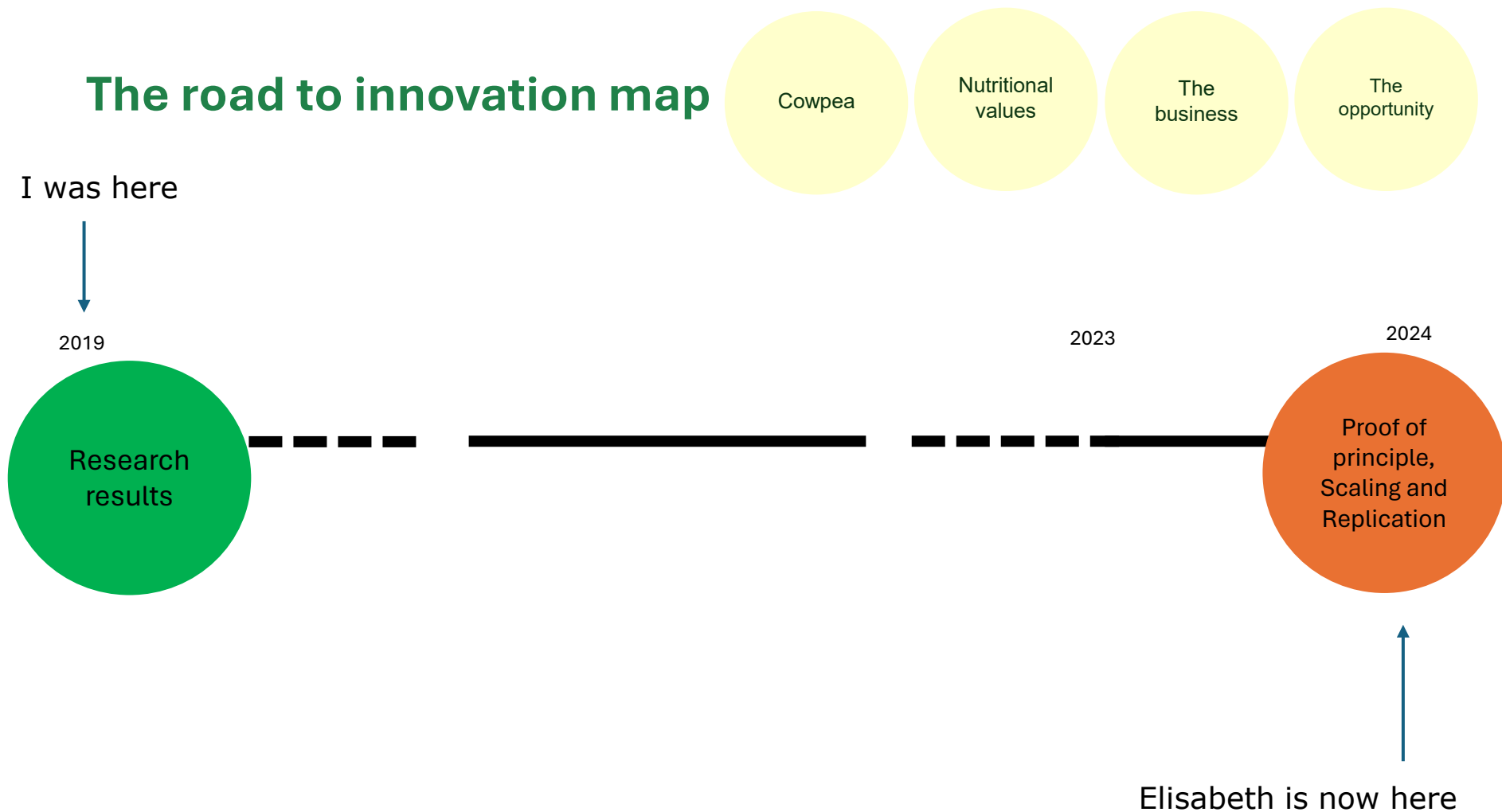
entrepreneurship

beneficiaries of investment

uptake by end-users

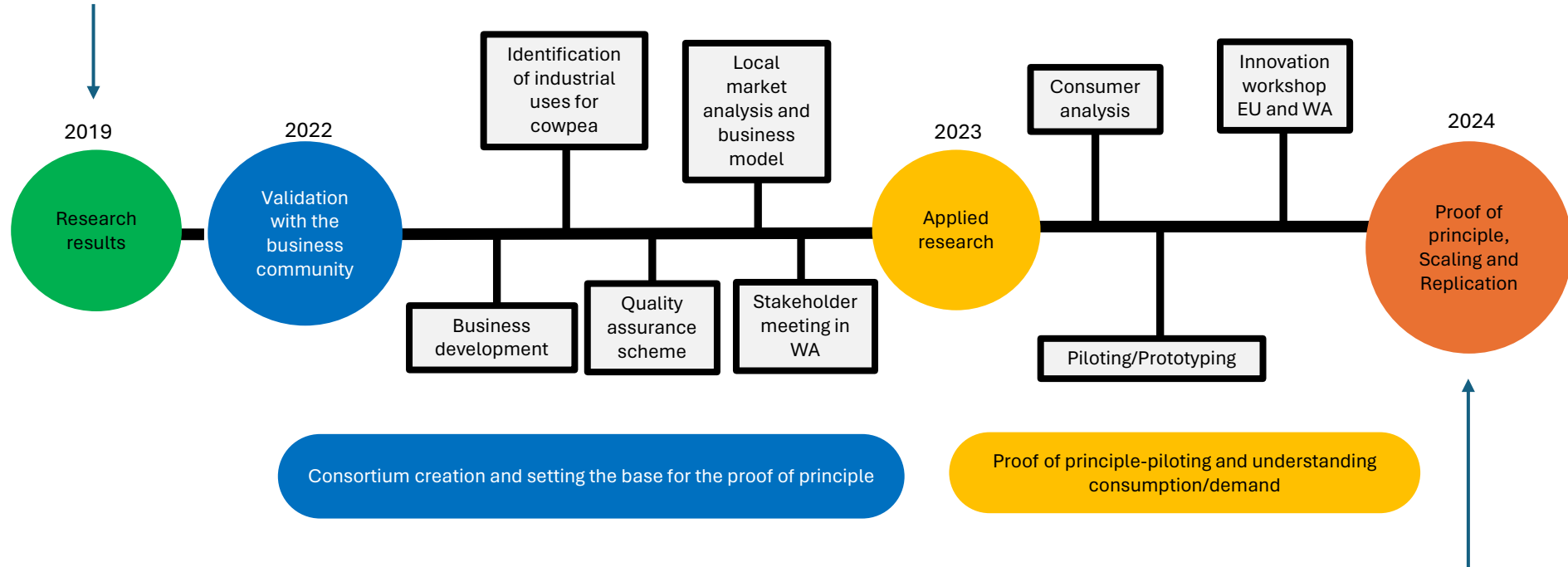
drivers of impact

# The road to innovation map



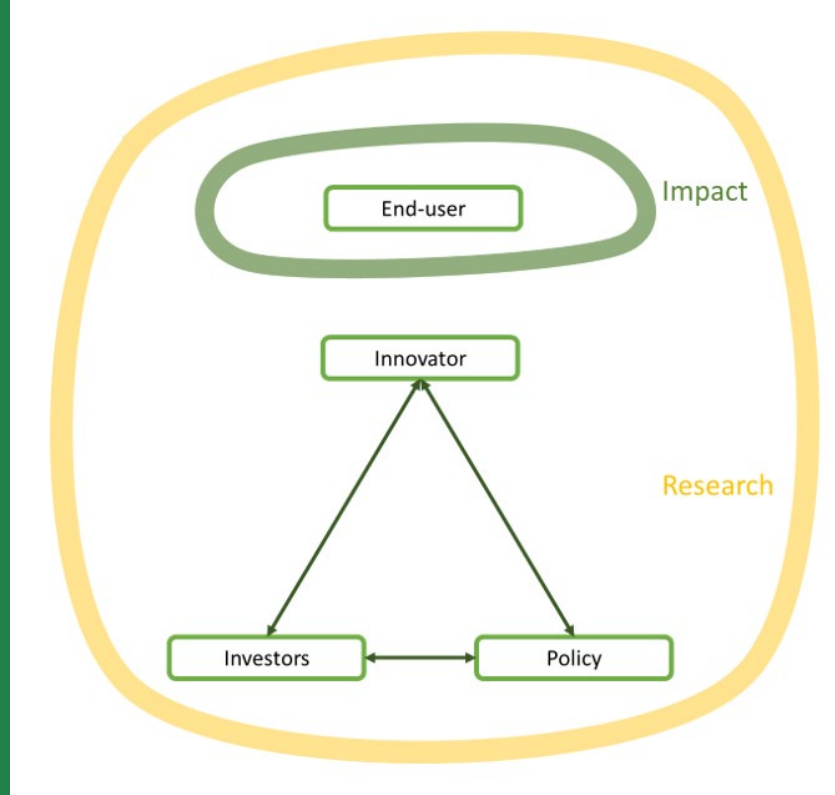
# The road to innovation map

I was here



Elisabeth is here

Get  
involved



Share  
idea

Make it happen

Sharing  
the challenge towards an  
**ECONOMICALLY VIABLE**  
food system transformation:

Research meets innovation

Tech meets nature  
meets people

Finance meets innovation  
and food system outcomes

Partnerships to invest in  
food innovation





# Thank you

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