



# FALL ARMYWORM DISSEMINATION TOOLS FROM USAID

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QUESTION AND ANSWER TRANSCRIPT

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## PRESENTERS

Bryan Conklin, USAID Bureau for Food Security

Joseph Huesing, USAID Bureau for Food Security

## MODERATOR

Julie MacCartee, USAID Bureau for Food Security

Charlin Caster, Knowledge Driven Agricultural Development Project

*Julie MacCartee:* Sounds great. Thank you, Brian, and thank you all for sharing your perspectives in the chat box. We do have time for questions on any of these guides. If there's something specific that you want to know, you weren't clear on, please feel free to ask any questions in the chat box.

So let's see. And we wanted to highlight that at least for one person, the animations were not downloading.

*Brian Conklin:* Yeah.

*Julie MacCartee:* So what should we do in that case, Brian?

*Brian Conklin:* Well, with the platform that we're using, sometimes – maybe you weren't able to watch the animation when we viewed it just now, but it's very easily accessible. Ben gave you all the links to the different websites. So also, you can go onto the Agrilinks website and you can watch it there as well. So there's a lot of ways that you can download and watch it. We're sorry if you couldn't watch it on the webinar for some reason, the bandwidth in your particular country or where you're at, it didn't actually come through on there. But it's out there and available, and we encourage you to go back and watch it and let us know what you think.

*Julie MacCartee:* Yep, we're trying to put it in as many places as possible. It's also on the bottom left under the links box there. It says video right at the beginning of the link to that video.

All right, so one person commented that you say that these documents are evergreen, which is excellent. That means that they'll be updated periodically as new information comes in. But how will we know when there are updates, and how often is the plan to update these documents?

*Brian Conklin:* It's a great question, and thank you very much for asking it. I think we'll just – I don't think we've got a mechanism right now to let you know, but obviously, when we update the IPM guide, we'll – you'll see a lot of announcements and press about that. It's a lot of work to do these updates, and we'll let you know.

With regard to the Pest Management Guides, right now, our major push is to get them developed for as many countries as possible before we begin going back

and revising and updating them. And then with regard to the SAWBO animations, we'll be rolling them out as they develop.

*Julie MacCartee:* Mm-hmm. Excellent.

*Joe Huesing:* So clearly, we'll have to have some kind of versioning control. These are the first ones out and the only ones out, so right now, you're fine, but as Brian pointed out, that's a work in progress, to get the versioning control mechanism process in place.

*Regina Eddy:* So let me mention, check your Agrilinks toolkit, which we've posted the link. Anything updated will be posted there immediately. And we will send periodic updates to this group to inform you when tools are updated.

*Julie MacCartee:* That sounds good. Excellent. All right. We have a question that isn't squarely in the purview of this webinar, but I think is still of interest, and will certainly be relevant to the next webinar, and that's from Owen Okoko, who asked, how might we ensure that farmers are trained in the use of pesticides, especially when economic interests are the norm in many businesses? And I thought Joe could address that.

*Joe Huesing:* So in terms of USAID funded projects, that's one of the requirements we have in terms of ensuring that all users of pesticides have been properly trained and have the proper equipment to use the pesticides that they've chosen for this mitigation. It's a big issue. There are a lot of organizations, a lot of African organizations, country level organizations, that are working on this pesticide issue. It's very broad. Paul Jepson is going to go into detail about this next week.

Part of the challenge we had in putting these recommendations together was that we had to make the assumption that probably most lower resource farmers would not have access to personal protective equipment. That very much limits the pesticides that you can use, if you go that route. But clearly, everybody on this call has a vested interest in working with a number of organizations to ensure that farmers get the proper information and training to use these pesticides.

*Julie MacCartee:* All right. Thank you, Joe. Another question from Malika Bonfor. Would it be possible to translate the tables for farmers into local languages?

*Brian Conklin:* Malika, thanks for the question. In everything that we're doing, I think we see our work with fall army worm as a partnership. There's a lot of organizations that we're partnering with, and obviously, we're partnering with host country governments. And so we're doing our best to provide resources for you within the scope of what we're able to do, but when it comes to something like these, translating these different tables, that's something that we're hoping you can easily do in your own countries, whether you're working with your local partners or your host country governments.

We encourage you to use this data. We've given you good quality science-based, peer-reviewed documents and approaches, and for many of these things, we're hoping that you'll find ways to partner with other organizations to translate those for smallholder farmers in their own languages.

With regard to the SAWBO animations, we can help you with that because of the level of technicality that's required, but with regard to a lot of the tables and things that we developed, they're resources for you to use, and we encourage you to find innovative ways to do that.

*Julie MacCartee:* Great. Thank you so much, Brian. Let's see. We've had a few other questions come in. Let's see. One just came in from Alice Niddo-Contar. How do you handle the use of HHPs by farmers? Are there any alternatives? And I'm not sure what HHPs are, so probably –

*Joe Huesing:* Hazardous pesticides.

*Julie MacCartee:* Oh, okay.

*Joe Huesing:* Yeah, easy question. Avoid. Avoid highly hazardous pesticides. Those should not be used by the smallholder farmers that most of us are targeting. Those types of pesticides have a very specialized place, very limited, but they're way outside the operational area for the folks that we're talking to.

In countries – so the way the process works is a country has to register a

pesticide, and they have to register it for the crop and the pest, and so part of last year, because this is a new pest, this country is catching up in that process, getting the safer material labeled. Additionally, we have a pesticide working group who one of their missions, and they're working on this very diligently with USDA, FAS, is to register newer, safer pesticides that would be a much better fit for smallholder farmers. And that work is progressing very well, and that's partly why the tables that we mentioned earlier are evergreen, because as those newer, better, safer materials become registered, we'll be able to update the tables to inform you that they're available.

*Julie MacCartee:* Great. Thank you so much, Joe. Let's see. All right. A question came in from Keith Cresman. In the Pest Management Decision Guide, would it be possible to include the possible use of the FAO FAMEWS mobile for recording and sharing fall army worm scouting and trap data?

*Brian Conklin:* Let me just start by – it's a great – we're grateful that FAO has their mobile app. These Pest Management Decision Guides, we spent a lot of time figuring out how to get a lot of data just onto a single page. So at this point in time, I think at least with regard to the Pest Management Decision Guides, and I'm going to refer this to Joe as well, it seems like it would be difficult to add much more information than what we have on them already. This is not to discount the value of the FAO app that's been developed, but I think it's great that we have multiple tools that are out there. For now, though, I think the Pest Management Decision Guides, we've got a format that we're using, and our main goal is to try to get them developed for as many countries as possible.

And while I'm at that, let me add to this, because this kind of combines with a question by Daniel Atwane about examples of Pest Management Decision Guides for crops like sorghum and finger millet. We are actually in the process of developing these pest management guides for sorghum as well, so stay tuned for that.

*Julie MacCartee:* Great. Sounds good. Thank you, Brian. Let's see. We're poring through some of our questions, making sure that we've gotten to them all. Phil Stefan just suggested coordinating with Digital Green on some of the extension advisory messages in local languages, since they have done a great job in other areas of producing local language videos. And so I don't know if that's currently happening, or –

*Brian Conklin:* Sure. We are actually in discussions with Digital Green. At this point, we haven't made any kind of – I mean, we've had our hands full just trying to get out the current tools that we have, so we'll stay tuned and see what happens going into the future. But there are a lot of great resources out there. For those of you who don't know what Digital Green is, Digital Green will actually go into a country and use local actors to develop a video about relevant topics. And so it's a great way of getting the community involved and finding a solution to the particular problems that they're doing, and then, of course, the video that they do is shot in local languages using people that they know. So it's a great tool that are out there. I encourage you to check out Digital Green.

*Julie MacCartee:* Great. Thank you. And I can see that Kristen Davis said that Digital Green is working on fall army worm in Ethiopia, so –

*Brian Conklin:* That's great.

*Julie MacCartee:* Excellent. All right. Let's see. We had a question, poring through our questions, and we've still got a few more minutes to get through them.

*[Crosstalk]*

*Joe Huesing:* real quick.

*Julie MacCartee:* Oh, go ahead. Yeah.

*Joe Huesing:* There's a lot of information around fall army worm that's available and being developed. There are a lot of stakeholders developing a number of tools that are going to add significantly to battling this pest. There's a – being formed an ARFA-D consortium, and whose mission will be to vet all technologies, evidence-based, science-based, for inclusion in the information portfolio by a number of organizations. So this is – as many know, science is a bit of a slow process, so as tools become available, that group of scientists will evaluate them and make recommendations for their use. And as soon as that material is vetted and approved, then we will be pushing that out for sure through our mechanisms.

*Julie MacCartee:*

Okay. Great. Joe, a question came in from Mdibo Torre that perhaps you can add a little bit of perspective on. Can poor farmers use other low cost techniques to limit the diseases of fall army worm, other than pesticide? So perhaps a little bit more elaboration on other than pesticides, what poorer farmers should be using, or how they can find out.

*Joe Huesing:*

Sure. It's an excellent question. Not everyone heard the webinar last week, but the general – the universally accepted process for dealing with insect pests, diseases, and weeds, is integrated pest management. And the integration of pest management includes several strategies, several of which are implemented even before the insect shows up in the field. These are things like agro-ecology, things like companion planting or mixed cropping, for example. The Brazilians gave a really nice example of how they use silage-based systems, which provided perhaps an easier way, and some ways of managing this pest.

It also includes things like biological control and making sure that beneficial insects – these are little bees and wasps and ants and things like this – are encouraged in your field.

The pesticide issue becomes evidence when you've done all that, you've done – used your best agronomics, used your fertilizer, you've adjusted your soil pH, you've used the correct planting date, you've used the correct variety, and you go out in your field, and oh, my gosh, I've got the pest in my field and it's causing economic damage. What do I do?

That's when you go to this pesticide toolbox and you decide what are my choices, and how – and what is the efficacy? A big issue we have is with on farm materials, have not been vetted, they have not been validated. Some of them we know don't work, and we know they're not very effective, and in some cases may be detrimental to the crop itself. And that's what the ARFA-D scientists are working on right now.

And it sounds like that's a new process, but actually, the stakeholders that we – in the slide that I showed you earlier, starting back in Entebi, and this includes very much the private sector, the US land grant universities, CG Center scientists, FAO scientists, etcetera, have vetted a lot of these.

But be careful with home-brewed remedies that people use on their farm in desperation. Many of those may not work. Many of those may be harmful. And in some cases, may even harm the plant.

*Julie MacCartee:* Interesting. Thank you, Joe. I thought I'd ask you a follow-up question that just came in about pesticides from Amin Futali, who said, how do you see the introduction of spray service providers to provide professional spraying services to control fall army worm? For example, Feed the Future Ethiopia, a USAID funded project, is partnering with Crop Life Africa to do this.

*Joe Huesing:* Yeah, excellent question. Yeah, Crop Life in the private sector really stepped in very quickly. They did a couple of things. They very much worked with us to get safer use pesticides registered. They created smaller packages of material that were more on the scale of what a smallholder farmer could afford and would use on their farms.

Without a doubt, professionally trained spray service providers is a great idea. These will be individuals that would be trained in the use of the pesticides and would be trained in choosing the correct pesticides, when to spray, etcetera. So fantastic idea. And of course, I think we're all hopeful that those kinds of services will be affordable and be available to farmers as a choice.

*Julie MacCartee:* Thank you, Joe. Excellent. And as long as we're talking about the science of fall army worm, Niberra Baba Tiertto was wondering, are there other non-crop plants that fall army worm can hide in when their preferred crop is not available? That is, plants in the wild that are not crops as hosts for the pests? And is that something farmers need to be aware of?

*Joe Huesing:* Very good question. The fall army worm can feed on probably 80 different crops. Entomologically, though, it probably doesn't complete development on all 80 crops. So there are alternative hosts for this animal, but realistically, maize and the grain crops – somebody asked a question I saw earlier. Sorghum, for example, millet, rice. These are the crops that this animal prefers. Certainly, there will be recommendations made in terms of controlling grasses, for example, certain kinds of grasses around fields. I'm not convinced that as a general statement we would make recommendations for farmers today in terms of alternative hosts that the fall army worm might survive on.

In part, this is because in much of Africa, the animal is going to be endemic. It'll have multiple generations per year, and it's highly migratory. This is an animal that can fly 1,000 kilometers and find a maize field. It's pretty good at finding

maize. So I'm not so sure that those kinds of interventions, at least today, to my knowledge, would be very useful to us.

*Julie MacCartee:* Thank you, Joe. Let's see. We have up to 15 more minutes for questions, so please keep them coming, if you have any specific questions about the resources, or, of course, we'll try and answer your general fall army worm questions as well.

Regina was interested in commenting on the few questions that came in about how we update these tools.

*Regina Eddy:* Yes. Thanks, everybody. This is a really good question. So I think we've established that we've done our best to reach out to the – to leverage the evidence-base. Remember, we've managed this pest successfully in the Americas for decades, and we've tried to capture that for use for smallholder farmers in Africa, and then we've pledged that we will update that IPM guide based on what many, many of you are finding in your fields in Africa.

So that's a given, but how do we continue to update and refresh the knowledge base, and how do we continue as a collective community to develop useful tools that clearly communicate the best information based on science to our many different stakeholders? So I actually want to throw the challenge back out to all of you. I'll tell you our initial thoughts and what the US government in general suggests, which is that we really, within our local communities, we analyze and understand the agriculture system. So who are the actors that naturally have a vested interest in this?

So for example, we have a number of private sector partners. They're incredibly flexible at innovating new tools for response of fall army worm. They may be doing demonstrations. They may be offering extension. That is a resource that could be leveraged in your community. Other actors include government investments, for example, in extension or research services.

So Brian mentioned earlier an important concept of building partnerships. Most countries, the 45 in Africa, and now the outbreak in India, countries have formed national level task forces in an attempt to bring partners together to tailor the response for local conditions. So while we could jump start the process here, we will not be able to ever responsibly address, certainly not from Washington, the nuances of local context, including climate and the agrosystem.

So this is really now – the next iteration may be up to you and your partners to think through. What are the tools you need most? What are you learning through

your various on the ground activities? And how do you bring forward new information? Of course, wherever USAID is present, we hope to be partnering with you. We're always here in Washington to help match you to the best experts, both on the continent and also globally. So we are here to help. But I don't want to – we really need to look at how we facilitate a strong system in each of your local communities, to continue to lead these efforts going forward.

*Julie MacCartee:*

All right. Thank you all. And as you can see, we've brought up some of our ending polls. These are all very helpful for us to help understand whether this webinar was useful to you and what you would be interested in going forward. So please do let us know your responses.

All right, so we – there were a few questions about people being a little unclear about the process for getting the SAWBO into local languages, and so, Brian, would you mind reiterating that?

*Brian Conklin:*

Sure. Let me start with Kathy Hamlin's question asking about what it is that we were asking for. And I think, Kathy, you were referring specifically to French and Portuguese. We've already decided obviously to translate the SAWBO clip into major languages, so languages like French, Portuguese, Swahili, and some other languages that are widely used are languages that we're already working on and that are on our list. And in the case of at least French and Portuguese, we have identified translators.

I think what we're also looking for is that many countries have local languages that – where you're working with a particular group of farmers. I know for me, I was working in Northern Ghana in my last posting, and there were multiple languages there. And it may be helpful to have the SAWBO clip translated into one of these local languages.

So for that particular process, for something that's smaller and not a major language, we are looking for people who can translate. And if you can identify somebody through one of your government partners or through one of your implementing partners that are working out in the field, or somebody that you know, where you've got a specific target group that you think you'd like to use the SAWBO clip to reach out to them, we do have that process. Ben walked us through it.

And really, the first step is to go ahead and contact us, and you'll see the email on the page that we provided for you within our notes, the fall army worm at USAID.gov. If you'll send us your request there, at least we can use that to begin

to prioritize the process. We've got some funding. We can do – I think at the time we were thinking up to three languages per country, but it'll depend obviously on the requests that come in.

So once we've gotten your request and we've prioritized it, then we'll go back to you and we'll go back to the person that you recommended for the translation process. We've got a very, very easy form for that person to follow through, where each clip has a page with the English on one side and space for you to write out the translation on the other side. Then the person basically just reads that into a recording device. That recording device goes back to SAWBO. SAWBO matches the recording to each page in the animation. And then we're going to publish that recording on the SAWBO site, so it can be easily downloaded and accessible.

So it's a great opportunity for you. We're looking to empower you to give you the tools that you need to work with your specific farmers. This doesn't have to be an AID project. If you're a civil society organization that's working out there, a local government partner, and you think that it would be beneficial to have this translated in a specific language, please let us know, and we'll do everything we can to accommodate you.

*Julie MacCartee:*

Great. Thank you for the clarification, Brian. That's really exciting.

All right. We are getting close to wrapping up here. We had one more question come in that is a pesticide related question, so we might as well toss that one out to Joe, from Envine Emianna. When is it proper to commence spraying at the farm? Is it as the plants germinate, and/or when the pests are noticed?

*Joe Huesing:*

It depends on your skill level. It depends on your – say the pesticide that you would choose to use. And it depends on the economics. So it's not an easy question to answer.

What I can tell you is in the sense of a smallholder farmer that may be poorly trained and doesn't have any protective equipment, what we have done is two things. First, train those individuals how to assess their fields early. What we're telling farmers to do, don't rely on any other tools. You can use other tools. Don't rely on them. Get out in your field and look. Look early. Look as soon as your seed are planted and they're germinating. You should be out in that field checking.

What we are suggesting for smallholder farmers, that they not try to use any kind

of treatments after the maize is roughly chest high, because there's not a safe way without protective equipment for them to apply any type of pesticide. So the idea is if they're going to use some kind of mitigation, that they do it early, and they use the safest available material, and that they consult whenever possible with an expert or somebody more knowledgeable than themselves, like an extension agent, for example, to help advise them.

Pesticides are not bad tools, but like every powerful tool, you have to be careful how you use them. This is true if you're a homeowner, for example, trying to treat bugs in your house, right? There are materials that do a very good job, but you have to know how to use them, and you have to choose them wisely.

*Brian Conklin:*

We want to thank you for joining us today. We've given you a lot of tools, and I want to just go back and kind of reiterate a couple of our topline messages here, and the first is using the guide. We've developed this integrated pest management guide, and we want you to use it. There are a lot of groups out there – I think everybody's trying to react and response to the fall army worm, and there's pressure to put things out there for people to use. We've worked very, very hard with a number of experts. We've peer reviewed this. We've got evidence-based approaches to addressing the fall army worm. We've got something that is approved, that's been validated, that is really a foundational document for dealing with the fall army worm, and we'd like you to use the guide.

And if there's ways that we could use the guide more effectively, if there are ways that you can help us learn how to make that a more manageable tool, to get it to the right people in the right way, please let us know. But we've put a lot of time and effort in this, and it's a great document. It's foundational, and it's a wonderful tool for you to use. So use the guide, use the guide, use the guide.

*Regina Eddy:*

And here are some examples that we often get questions about. Thanks, Brian. Ways you might consider using the guide, when you're doing your project design, if you want to integrate a response to fall army worm into the many things you'll already – the activities you're already doing, the guide, as you walk through it, should give you some excellent ideas.

If you're meeting with partners, members of the government, if you're attending meetings of the task force when interventions are being designed, please reference that guide. It's important to try to build on the extensive global knowledge we have on how one manages the pest.

The third thing is some of you are reviewing proposals from technical partners

who want to assist with responding to fall army worm. If you want a reference check as to whether they are current with the science, the guide has attempted to assemble the best science under an IPM framework. So those are just a few ideas. We frequently get questions. We are happy to help with all of those tasks as well. But just to remind you, it's an excellent double check in the field as to whether the best science is being brought forward.

*Julie MacCartee:*

And if you're like me and you like things that are clear and simple, that's why we've developed these one-page country specific pest management decisions guides. These are useful tools. Stay tuned, because we'll be bringing a lot more of these online for other countries. We'll be doing them in local languages. But there's a lot of good resources that are out there. If there are ways that you can help us get these resources into the hands of people that need them, please let us know.

And then, finally, I want to thank Ben Blalock and the whole team over at SAWBO for the excellent work they've done on this first clip on scouting. We encourage you to download the clip. We encourage you to look for innovative ways to use that. And of course, if you've got ideas on translation, we probably have exhausted letting you know about that, but we're interested in finding ways to use that tool effectively.

Ben highlighted some of the ways that we can get that tool out to farmers. Having worked in countries where there are farmers that don't have access to the internet, the great thing about that SAWBO app that they developed is once you've downloaded it onto the app, you don't need internet access. You can transport that to a group of farmers anywhere, and they have access to see and watch the video. So there's great ways that we know you and your partners can find to use those tools.

And with that, I want to thank you for joining us, and I'll turn it back over to Julie.

*Julie MacCartee:*

Thank you so much. Yeah, thank you to our presenters for highlighting this really excellent suite of tools. We sincerely hope that they will be helpful to you in your work, and hope you'll stay in touch surrounding your use of these tools.

Most importantly, I would like to thank our attendees. Thank you for tuning in and for asking your excellent questions. And I would also like to thank the Agrilinks team for your always excellent support of Agrilinks webinars.

For those who joined late or had any trouble with your audio or video, these webinars are being recorded and will be posted on Agrilinks. You'll get an email in a week or so with a link to both this webinar recording and the last webinar recording. And as a reminder, do sign up for the last webinar in our series, focusing on pesticides, which will be next Wednesday, same time and place, as April said.

So we're going to go ahead and wrap up. Thank you sincerely for your participation, and have a great rest of your day.

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