

## Fit-to-Purpose in Agri & Food – Factsheet

### *Fit-to-Purpose in agri & food means:*

- That a company implements a strategy whereby existing high-end products or services are adjusted or redesigned to specific local market situations; and/or
- That a company develops new products or services based on existing knowledge;
- So that the products or services realize a “fit” to the demand in developing countries and that they can be used without specific knowledge and/or (extensive) training;
- And that this results in economic and sustainable growth for business, industry and the countries.

### *Important starting points and “drivers” for success are:*

- A. Demand-driven by markets in development countries;
- B. Focus on new and local markets;
- C. Upscaling instead of downscaling;
- D. New collaborations in the value chain;
- E. Business-driven strategic orientations.

*(More information about these drivers can be found in our Position Paper.)*

## From Seed to Crop

### By GrowPact – Successful growing for everyone

The vision of GrowPact is: “Everyone deserves access to an abundant harvest. The increase of the world population, results in an increase of demand for quality food. GrowPact believes that accessibility will create possibilities. GrowPact helps to improve cultivation of young plants in a basic and easy way.”

### What is the strategy of GrowPact?



GrowPact is an integral concept of the growth-process “from seed to crop”. This growth process aims to deliver an optimal and effective full-fledged amount of small plants with a robust and smart-tech approach (without waste or losses). These plants can be grown into mature plants for production of vegetables or fruits for local demand. The GrowPact concept is a system of proven technologies to produce high-quality seedling, made for manual use and with low energy use and limited ICT-systems support.

GrowPact’s strategic focus is to enable local markets and actors in developing countries to respond to the growing demand for fresh and sufficient food in developing countries. And in this way to contribute to food security and the reduction of postharvest losses in the agri & food chains in developing countries.

### Historical background

The origin of GrowPact lies within its mother organisation VISCON Group, which is one of the founding fathers of mechanization innovations and current techniques used for high production growth in the horticulture sector. VISCON Group is an important supplier of high-innovative automated and robotized systems for the breeding of plants till the processing and packaging into end-consumer products for horticulture and AGF-chains in Western countries.

The development of GrowPact meant a big shift in VISCON Group’s R&D development. For GrowPact they needed to develop a “smart-tech” robust concept for manual use and with low-energy needs, instead of the high-tech automated and energy intensive systems they mainly develop.

The VISCON Group invested in the development of GrowPact themselves and have not used external finance so far (like subsidy). Their strategy is to focus on how to enter and realize turnover growth in this new growth markets and countries.

For the adaptation of the GrowPact concept within African countries, GrowPact cooperates with the “Agribusiness Booster” program of ICCO, which will support the local owner of the concept with the finances and organization of the system and starting of the business model.

For successful further development of the concept and its implementation, GrowPact invests in exchanging experiences with Dutch agri & food companies operating in developing countries based on a fit-to-purpose approach.

## Description of the development of GrowPact – From Seed to Crop

### From seed to crop

The cultivation of young plants is the most important phase of the cultivation process of any plant. If anything goes wrong during this phase, the young plants will constantly encounter problems during the entire process. In the end this will result in lesser yields.

### GrowPact the concept

GrowPact is a concept in which the basic elements of breeding systems and materials are integrated to grow seeds into small plants. GrowPact chooses smart technologies at the lowest possible price. By simplifying their growing technology, they can offer a “basic total solution” to meet the quality requirements and gain the efficiency, necessary to improve the cultivation of young plants.



Figure: GrowPact concept with the elements of the system “from seed to crop”.

GrowPact helps to achieve better yields by making proven growing technology accessible for farmers worldwide. GrowPact delivers all the necessary tools and knowledge they need during the cultivation process of young plants. All the smart technologies that exist in the high-tech machines they produce, are now available in fully manual machines.

GrowPact aims for a collaboration model to be managed by local partners. Collaboration with local partners is sought for to come to a successful adaptation matching the local demand in the local markets. By exchanging knowledge and experience, GrowPact wants to support the breeding of seedlings. The concept of GrowPact is open and flexible enough to enable working with local partners, who can deliver some of the elements and materials of the integrated concept (like for instance the seeds, green houses, etcetera).

The first country where the GrowPact concept was started, is Kenya. A local partner is owner of the concept and will develop it with local employees and farmers as partners to grow vegetables for the local markets. The VISCON Group has historically good relations and experiences with Kenya.

## What are the critical success factors?

### Strategy into new markets and local demand

There is strong commitment and belief of the management to add value and to realize impact by creating solutions for bigger societal problems such as availability of food for growing populations and the reduction of food losses. The mission of GrowPact is: "By 2025 GrowPact will support 50 GrowPact-entrepreneurs, who reach 50,000 small scale farmers, that produce over 200,000,000 vegetable seedlings a year".

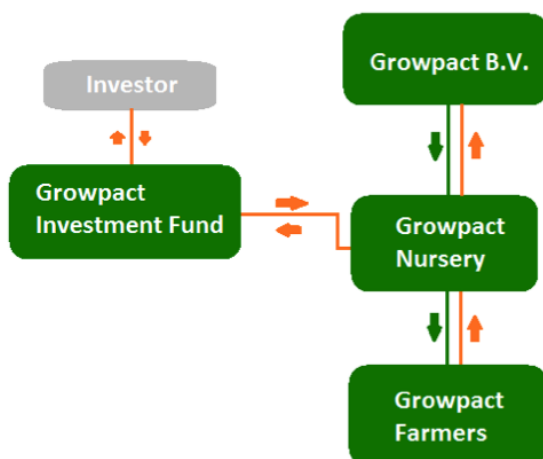
GrowPact believes in new opportunities for local entrepreneurship and local farmers. They understand that for successful adaptation of GrowPact they need to develop a "fit" with the demand of local markets, and they have to collaborate with new partners for adaptation of the newly developed system within these local chains and markets.

### "Reverse" innovation

The company developed a "smart tech" strategy of their high-end knowledge and innovative systems, and they looked back at their early stage knowledge and development of systems in the horticulture sector in the Netherlands some 50 years ago. They used these insights to develop a new robust concept with proven technologies for manual use and low energy needs, that can be easily adopted in these new markets. They build the capacity of local entrepreneurs in an "academy".

### Collaborate with (local) partners

The concept needs a small investment comparable to their high-end systems and is compatible for local markets. The concept has been made modular, so partners (i.e. Dutch or local) can add elements to the concept of GrowPact to create a better fit with local markets (like seeds, green houses, etc.).



Together with ICCO, GrowPact developed an organization and finance model to support the local entrepreneur (owner) and support the adaptation of GrowPact with small-scale farmers (growers of the small plants) and within local markets.

In the development of GrowPact they work together with ICCO experiences with local networks in developing countries.

*Scheme: GrowPact organizational and finance model*

### More information

For more information about the lessons learned from developing a Fit-to-Purpose strategy and concept, please contact the Food & Business Knowledge Platform at [info@knowledge4food.net](mailto:info@knowledge4food.net) or Coen Faber at [coenfaber@purebirds.com](mailto:coenfaber@purebirds.com).



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