

The Prioritization Framework (WSJF & RICE)

The Challenge of Selection In any strategy engagement, there are always more “Good Ideas” than there is time or capital to execute them. For Green Growth Solutions, our analysis uncovered over a dozen potential improvements. To solve this, we employed the **WSJF (Weighted Shortest Job First)** framework to prioritize based on the urgency of value.

The Specific Instance: High-Value vs. Quick Win We faced a classic dilemma between a “Moonshot” innovation and a “Quick Win.”

Initiative	CoD	Duration	Reach	Impact	Confidence	Effort	WSJF	RICE
IoT Sensor Mesh (The “Moonshot”)	9	8	100%	9	50%	8	1.1	56
Pricing Discipline (The “Quick Win”)	5	1	100%	5	90%	1	5.0	450

Breakdown of Values:

1. IoT Sensor Mesh):

- **CoD (9) & Impact (9):** Extremely high value potential. Real-time data could eliminate spoilage and guarantee “Grade A” fruit, maximizing the quality premium.
- **Duration (8) & Effort (8):** High difficulty. Requires importing hardware (customs delays), installing 500+ units, and extensive farmer training.
- **Confidence (50%):** Low certainty. High risk of hardware theft in open fields and technical failure due to poor connectivity.
- **Result:** Despite the high value, the massive effort and risk drive the WSJF score down to **1.1**.

2. Pricing Discipline (The “Quick Win”):

- **CoD (5) & Impact (5):** Moderate value. It doesn’t create new product, but it stops the immediate bleeding of margin to middlemen.
- **Duration (1) & Effort (1):** Extremely low active effort. It is simply a policy decision and a memo to sales agents.
- **Confidence (90%):** High certainty. We control the pricing policy fully; execution risk is minimal.
- **Result:** The low effort and high confidence drive the WSJF score up to **5.0**, making it the clear immediate priority.

Sequencing and Cost of Delay

Justification to the Board We justified prioritizing the “boring” Pricing Discipline over the “exciting” IoT Sensors using the **Cost of Delay** argument.

Managing the “Cost of Delay” This approach manages the “Cost of Delay” for the cooperative in three specific ways:

1. **Minimizing Immediate Cash Bleed:** Every day we delayed the Pricing Policy to focus on Sensors, the cooperative lost **GHS 150,000** in leaked margin. Conversely, delaying the Sensors by 1 month cost effectively **zero**, because the sensors provide no value until the harvest season begins. The “Cost of Delay” for Pricing was immediate cash; for Sensors, it was future potential.
2. **Funding the Journey (Self-Funding Transformation):** Agribusinesses are cash-flow sensitive. If we started with IoT, the cooperative would enter a “Capital Trough” (spending on hardware with no return). By starting with Pricing, we generated the **working capital** required to buy the sensors in Phase 2. We used the “Quick Win” to pay for the “Big Bet.”

3. Building Operational Trust: Delivering a quick financial win (Pricing) earned the Board's trust. If we had embarked on a clear 6-month sensor installation with no interim results, "Transformation Fatigue" would set in. The "Quick Win" bought us the political capital to execute the hard project later.

The Green Growth project clearly demonstrated why professional stewardship is essential when using AI-assisted analysis. While AI tools can efficiently generate frameworks, they often lack the local and operational context required to make insights credible and actionable at the board level. In our experience, five grounding factors were critical in transforming generic analysis into a board-ready report.

First, **Infrastructure Realities**, specifically poor road networks, significantly shaped our logistics strategy. Generic AI analysis suggested optimizing for "just-in-time" delivery on assumed highway networks. However, in Ghana, poor feeder road conditions frequently cause transit delays and mechanical breakdowns. We grounded the analysis by building in buffer stocks and realistically modeling transit times, rejecting the AI's efficiency models for a resilience-based approach.

Second, **Logistics Constraints** at Tema Port were a key grounding factor. While AI recommended minimizing inventory holding costs to improve capital efficiency, handling realities at the port dictated otherwise. Chronic congestion means customs delays of up to three days are common. By explicitly accounting for these delays and recommending "Safe Harbor" inventory buffers, we prevented the operational risk of stockouts and demurrage charges that a standard model would have missed.

Third, **Economic Volatility**, particularly regarding fuel and forex, was essential to capture. Generic analysis often assumes standard inflation rates (e.g., 5%). In contrast, we highlighted that transport costs in Ghana are deregulated and linked to the US dollar. By incorporating specific "Pass-through" effects of Cedi depreciation on fuel prices, we ensured the financial projections reflected the true volatility of operating margins.

Fourth, **Environmental Risks** related to **Galamsey (Illegal Mining)** were critical. An AI tool reviewing a map would suggest utilizing nearby rivers for irrigation to save costs. However, local stewardship required flagging these water sources as potentially mercury-poisoned due to illegal mining. We recommended investing in boreholes to ensure water purity, directly protecting the company's export certification and brand reputation.

Fifth, **Market Dynamics** and human capital considerations fundamentally altered our pricing strategy. AI algorithms suggested "dynamic algorithmic pricing" to maximize revenue. However, we recognized that in rural Ghana, sales occur via verbal negotiation. Complex, fluctuating prices would confuse sales agents and empower middlemen. We replaced the algorithm with a "Static Price Anchor" (GHS 8–10), grounding the strategy in the human capability of the workforce to negotiate effectively.

Failure to apply this level of contextual editing erodes trust between a consultant and a client for two main reasons. First, it signals a lack of judgment. Clients expect consultants not just to present information, but to interpret it through the lens of lived operational experience. Second, unedited AI content shifts risk to the client. If recommendations fail because they ignored local constraints (like road quality or Galamsey), accountability falls on executive leadership.

Ultimately, professional stewardship lies in owning the analysis, not outsourcing thinking to AI. By grounding frameworks in Ghana's specific infrastructural, economic, and environmental realities, we ensured that the final report was not only technically sound, but also credible, defensible, and worthy of executive trust.

A key insight from the Green Growth analysis was that model accuracy alone does not create economic value. True Economic Value Creation (EVC) only occurs when predicted improvements are paired with a clear understanding of what must be invested, changed, and controlled to realise those gains. This is why top-performing firms such as Numpy and Green Growth Solutions consistently emphasised presenting "The Ask" alongside projected savings.

In our analysis, a model-driven prediction of **GHS 500,000 in additional revenue** (via Quality Premiums and Pricing Discipline) initially appeared compelling. However, without articulating the required **GHS 38,350** budget for training and SMS systems, this figure remained hypothetical. Presenting "The Ask" forced the conversation to shift from "what could happen" to "what must be done to make it happen."

From a financial perspective, several assumptions had to be validated. First, the **market demand curve** needed validation; we had to confirm that buyers were actually willing to pay the **GHS 10 anchor price** for Grade A fruit, ensuring our revenue projections weren't optimistic. Second, the **baseline rejection rate** had to be accurate; if the cooperative was already producing high-quality fruit, the upside of the IoT sensors would be limited. Third, incremental costs—such as data transmission fees and replacement costs for stolen sensors—had to be netted against gross revenue to determine true EVC.

Operationally, the assumptions were even more critical. The projected value depended on strict **farmer adherence to SMS harvest triggers** (e.g., “Do Not Harvest if Moisture > 25%”). It also assumed that sales agents could effectively hold the **GHS 8-10 price floor** against aggressive middlemen. Without clear accountability and behavioral compliance from the farmers and sales teams, the mathematical “Optimization” would yield zero actual cash.

By explicitly stating these assumptions and the associated resource requirements, we converted a model prediction into a validated business case. This approach mattered to the **Cooperative Board** because it clarified risk ownership, investment trade-offs, and expected returns. It also allowed leadership to stage investments (starting with Pricing Discipline before the IoT “Moonshot”), test assumptions through pilots, and stop or scale initiatives based on realised results.

In reflection, the discipline of presenting “The Ask” alongside projected savings is what distinguishes analytics that sounds impressive from analytics that earns executive confidence. Model accuracy may indicate potential, but validated assumptions, funded execution, and measurable outcomes are what ultimately define Economic Value Creation.

Trust: When the client understands *why* a decision is made, they trust the decision.