



Concept Note

Regional Workshop on the use of Mobile Technologies for Food Security, Agriculture and Rural Development

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Contact

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BACKGROUND

Asia-Pacific region, home to more than 60% of the world's population and about 65% of the world's poor. In most of the countries in this region, rural livelihoods could be improved by providing them access to the right information at the right time. Mobile-based information services have been tried in many countries to deliver information services to the agrarian communities. More people than ever before have access to mobile phones and many of them are at the bottom of the economic pyramid (BOP) living in less developed countries. A favorable policy and the right blend of technology and information services have proven to contribute significantly to the income generating capacity of rural communities especially the farmer.

As the development of ICT is seen as a major driver of economic growth, and as the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon puts it – "In today's world, telecommunications are more than just a basic service – they are a means to promote development, improve society and save lives." This workshop aims to bring together policy makers, experts, practitioners and other private sector players who influence and are involved in using mobile phones and ICTs as a catalyst for sustainable livelihoods.

The availability of reliable data on the use of telecom in rural areas gives us valuable insights into how ICTs and mobile phones-based information services could be designed as an effective tools for information dissemination to rural communities. There has been a lot of

innovations around web-mobile and mobile-web based solutions for information dissemination.

This workshop aims to bring together a cross section of thought leaders from organizations and countries with innovative initiatives in mobile-based information services and in ICT for rural development and will provide a unique opportunity to exchange the latest information on development trends thereby provides an opportunity for knowledge sharing and to validate models for use in agricultural and rural development. It will also provide a venue for networking to initiate innovative, new projects that will bridge the rural digital divide and advance sustainable development with ICT.

OBJECTIVES

Specific goals and objectives of this workshop are to share experiences and good practices about the use of Information Communication Technologies (ICT), specifically mobile phone, for agricultural extension and development and rural poverty reduction in Asia and the Pacific and to extend the application of successful innovations and good practices more widely.

- (i) The workshop will create a platform to facilitate a dialogue among various stakeholders, policy makers and ministries of agriculture in the region on the use of mobile technology and ICTs.



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- (ii) To present and exchange current practices and public policies regarding the use of mobile technologies for information dissemination to address the challenges of agricultural development and rural poverty reduction especially food security and sustainable agricultural development;
- (iii) Provide an opportunity to learn from the experience of other counties on favorable policy environment to facilitate the uptake of mobile-based information dissemination in agriculture.
- (iv) To discuss the role of public and private sector, policies and ways to increase the use of mobile technologies in rural areas to strengthen networks and explore prospects for public private partnership related to mobile technology.
- (v) Introduce and demonstrate mobile applications which have been developed and/or deployed in various sectors e.g. health, education, agriculture, finance, and businesses;

Expected outputs from the forum are in line with the objectives described earlier. These include:

- (i) Awareness of mobile applications in various sectors as the key for agricultural development.
- (ii) Sharing, demonstrating and disseminating available resources (e.g. guidelines, toolkits, ICT applications) so that participants can make use of them and in turn promote to others thereby avoiding duplication of work. Raise awareness of the established global e-Agriculture Community for knowledge sharing in this field.
- (iii) Promote ICT uptake in rural communities, along the lines of WSIS initiatives.
- (iv) A workshop report.
- (v) Conceptualize a dynamic report of good practices using mobile technologies in agriculture in the region, that could be disseminated and discussed through the global e-Agriculture Community and possibly also in hard copy.



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DATES VENUE FORMAT	
Date	3rd & 4th April 2012
Venue	Hotel Plaza Athene, Bangkok, Thailand
Workshop Programme	<p>The forum will be divided into sessions each with its specific theme –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Session I: Status of mobile use and rural information systems in agriculture and rural development in Asia and the Pacific (LIRNEAsia)• Session II: Select case studies on m on public sector policies and practices on mobile technologies used for agricultural and rural development• Session III: Analysis of PP partnerships Marketplace• Session V: Wrap up
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam.• Invited Private Sector
Exhibition	Exhibition space will be located in front of the Conference Rooms , event partners are invited to exhibit ICT applications which are relevant to the session themes of the forum. They may set up a booth but at their own expense.
Expected Number of Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 25 forum participants