DRAFT REPORT

OF THE

e-AGRICULTURE STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATION

- DEVELOPING NATIONAL e-AGRICULTURE STRATEGY GUIDE-

3-5 MARCH 2015
BANGKOK, THAILAND

1. BACKGROUND

While the need for e-Agriculture strategies is acknowledged by many stakeholders, most countries are still to adopt holistic or sub-sectorial e-strategies on agriculture. e-agriculture strategies will help to rationalize resources (financial and human), harness ICT opportunities and address challenges in the agricultural sector. The existence of a comprehensive national strategy can prevent e-Agriculture projects from being implemented in isolation and develops efficiency gains from intra sector and cross sector synergy.

FAO and ITU with support from partners including CTA are developing an e-Agriculture Strategy Guide and set of resources to facilitate country decision makers in developing a national e-Agriculture vision, action plan and implementation strategy.

Starting from the goals and needs of the agriculture sector and an assessment of the current status of e-Agriculture, the process expects to result in a plan that builds on what exists already and identifies actions to be undertaken in an integrated and prioritized manner.

2. OBJECTIVES

The Stakeholder Consultation Meeting aimed to:

- Present Asia-Pacific examples in e-Agriculture, especially the experience in Sri Lanka

- Discuss and finalize the e-Agriculture Strategy Guide; and to

- Discuss recommendations and identify opportunities for testing the toolkit in some pilot countries.

- Create a platform to facilitate a dialogue among various stakeholders, policy makers and ministries of agriculture, ICT and telcos in the region on the implementation and adoption of e-Agriculture services.

- Promote the knowledge sharing, and exchange current practices and public policies regarding e-Agriculture services;

The content of the strategy guide takes into account major factors and current issues relating to agricultural and ICT development, as well as national e-strategy development in the target countries.

3. OUTPUTS

- The draft the e-Agriculture Strategy Guide presented, discussed and supported by experts.

- Participating countries appreciated the guide and some countries expressed interest in testing the e-Agriculture Strategy Guide at country level.

- Knowledge and experience on e-Agriculture shared among participating countries, international organizations, individual experts including

- A meeting report produced which contains the conclusions and recommendations on the e-Agriculture Strategy Guide together with experiences and success stories and challenges.

The workshop in particular discussed the draft strategy guide.

4. 2 INTRODUCTION AND OPENING

The e-agriculture stakeholders' consultation meeting on "Developing National e-Agriculture Strategy Guide" was held in Hotel Amari Watergate, Bangkok, Thailand, from 3-5 March 2015. The Meeting was organized by the FAO, ITU and CTA. It was attended by XX experts including representatives from countries (Benin, Bhutan, Cote D'Ivoire, Kenya, Lao PDR, Ghana, Sri Lanka, Rwanda, Thailand), International Organizations (ADB, CTA, CABI, ECOWAS, FAO, ITU,…), Non Governmental Organizations and Research Agencies (FHI360, LIRNEAsia, …), individual experts and other agencies. The list of participants is attached to this report (Annex 1).

Mr. Ken Lohento, ICT4D Programme Coordinator, CTA welcomed the participants to the stakeholders meeting and introduced the work programme of the CTA in the field of e-agriculture. He thanked the ITU, FAO for the partnership and the experts for joining the meeting, and called for open discussion and comments that would assist in improving the guide further.

e-Agriculture Stakeholders Consultation: Group photograph

Mr. Ioane Koroivuki, Regional Director, ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific thanked the FAO and CTA for co-organizing the meeting. He welcomed all the participants to this consultation and invited their frank opinion on the draft e-agriculture strategy guide. In his welcome remarks, Mr. Korivuki detailed the current status of ICT penetration, and shared expectations around the future growth of information and communications technologies. While recognizing the importance of ICT applications in various facets of the society, he stressed upon the need for a comprehensive strategy around e-Agriculture and expressed his gratitude to FAO, partners (especially CTA), experts and reviewers to join the initiative.

Opening Ceremony: Mr. Ken Lohento, CTA , Dr Hiroyuki Konuma, FAO, Mr. Ioane Koroivuki, ITU

Dr Hiroyuki Konuma, Assistant Director General and Regional Representative, FAO Regional office for Asia and the Pacific, in his remarks highlighted the challenges faced by the world relating to food security and hunger and that sustained political commitment at the highest levels, with food security and nutrition as top priorities, is a prerequisite for hunger eradication. Dr. Konuma informed the meeting that realizing the need for a guiding framework for countries implementing e-Agriculture services, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) developed the e-Agriculture Strategy Guide with technical support from partners including the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), among others. The existence of a comprehensive national strategy can prevent e-Agriculture projects from being implemented in isolation and, in the process, generate efficiency gains from intra-sector and cross-sector synergies. Dr. Konuma also mentioned that Bhutan and Sri Lanka are the first pilot countries in the Asia-Pacific region where this guide will be customized and offered to provide technical assistance (together with ITU and partners) to any country that wishes to customize the guide for implementation and adoption within a local context.

5. SUMMARY OF THE CONSULTATION MEETING

The consultation meeting discussed the following main issues:
   a) Draft National e-Agriculture Guide
   b) Existing situation of e-Agriculture in selected countries
   c) Working with partners to customize the guide for countries in regions other than Asia-Pacific
   d) The Next Steps

5.1 DRAFT NATIONAL e-AGRICULTURE GUIDE

The authors presented the draft national e-agriculture guide to the participants and invited their comments. A number of brainstorming exercises were conducted with experts to discuss, in detail, the key components of the proposed guides. The draft guide is available at http://bit.ly/1FJfewJ

The experts, in general, appreciated the strategic approach that guide adopted to augment ICTs in agriculture and felt that such a tool would facilitate improving the national agriculture outcomes. The experts also felt that the suggested approach was feasible for adoption at national level to develop a new e-Agriculture strategy or to improve existing e-Agriculture strategies or programmes.

In order to improve the guide further, the following key suggestions were made on the guide itself
   a) Create a simplified version of the detailed guide for senior management and decision makers for them to get a gist of the approach and objectives quickly.
   b) The implementation of e-Agriculture strategy in the country should be led by the Ministry of Agriculture with support from the ICT Ministry, ICT Authority / Regulators. Buy in of decision makers from key sectors is very important for the successful implementation of e-Agriculture Strategy.
   c) The guide should mention at what point an e-ag strategy would be useful. For instance, some countries might not even have an ICT master plan, so might not be ready for an e-ag strategy.
   d) A detailed assessment of feasibility of strategy should be undertaken before implementation.
   e) In addition to the existing components of the strategy (Leadership and governance, Strategy and investment, Services and applications, Infrastructure, Standards and interoperability, Legislation, policy and compliance, Workforce

and capacity development), the experts suggested inclusion of a component on Content / Knowledge as it is critical for Agriculture Strategy.

f) A short guide to the MS Excel Tool, developed should also be prepared to facilitate its use by national e-Agriculture Strategy Team.

While these comments were noted, the draft guide has been forwarded to all participants for any further suggestions until 31st March 2015.
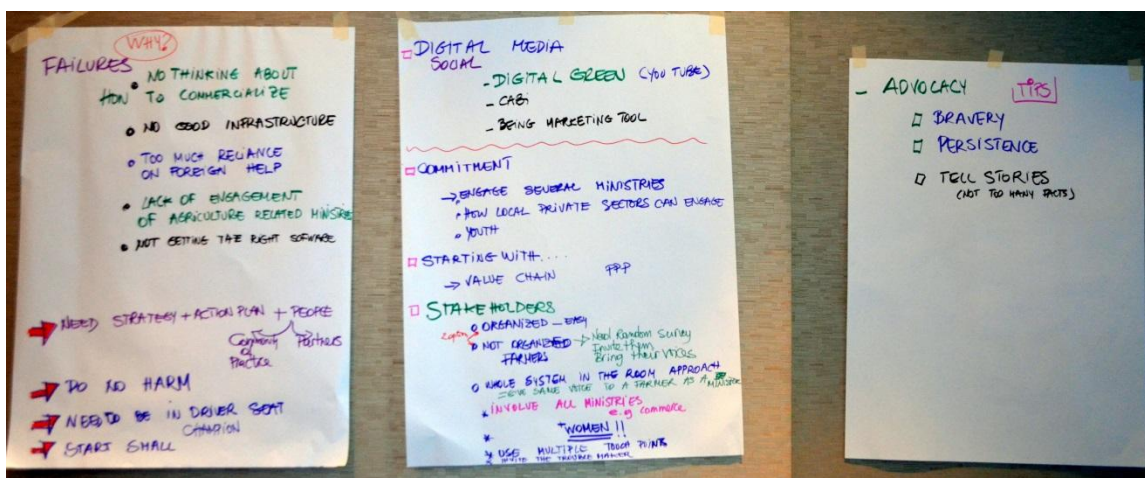
5.2 SUMMARY OF PANEL DISCUSSIONS ON SITUATION OF E-AGRICULTURE

Panel discussions were held with representatives from Benin, Bhutan, Cote D'Ivoire, Kenya, Lao PDR, Ghana, Sri Lanka, Rwanda and Thailand. During the discussion, the representatives shared their country initiatives, experiences and challenges in relation to e-Agriculture. Some of the

Experts from CABI, Lirne Asia, ECOWAS, FAO and ITU also shared their opinions and experiences through discussions, role play and brainstorming exercises.

Panel discussions during e-Agriculture stakeholders consultation meeting

Summary of discussions

- Ownership of the Ministry of Agriculture is key for the successful implementation of e-Agriculture Strategies and programmes;
- Focus on people and partnership not only the technology should be given to ensure sustainability;
- Recognizing the cross-sectoral nature of the Agriculture and the ICT Sector, one of the key challenge is identification and coordination amongst stakeholders;
- Capacity development and skills development in the adoption of ICT is also very important;
- Some e-Agriculture services that were identified include
  - Content management, Market information System and Advisory Services
  - Ease of financial transactions; Advisory services; monitoring services to detect landslide risks, follow up after artificial insemination.
  - Improved data collection and analysis for decision making;
  - Supply chain management;
  - Knowledge management for extensions and farmers

5.3 NEXT STEPS

The meeting also recognized the following important next steps
  - Advocacy
  - Preparatory background research
  - Consultation Workshop (stakeholders engagement)
  - Strategic Recommendations (selling doc with concrete quick wins)

- o Governance
- o ICT services: High priority solutions (short term), Innovation (long-term)
- o Enabling environment (Infrastructure, Legislations, Capacity development, etc.)
- o Get buy-in and approval from highest decision making
- o Develop Action Plan and Resources
- o Adoption of the strategy and fund raising

6 STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION MEETING PARTICIPANTS'FEEDBACK

6.1 Main take-away from the workshop

- Experience/suggestion on initiating development e-Agriculture strategies
- Useful contacts
- Community of practice
- Strategy thinking advocacy
- Ministry of Agricultural to set up committee
- Monitoring the implementation of this strategy guide
- Lesson learn from this workshop/country experience, recommendation on specific problem, strategy guide
- Understanding of the planning process of Agri.
- Get to know about concern and challenges of different countries in Agri.
- Clear direction about implementation
- The need of leadership and shampionship
- Need to bridge the cross sectorial gap
- A clearer understanding of developing e-Agriculture strategy
- Networking
- Simplified steps for the way forward
- Developing a national e-Agriculture strategy is a consultative process
- Next step to carry forward at home
- Learning experiences on what works well and not in other countries
- Need of continuous networking with such group
- Learning experience from other countries
- Process of developing an e-Agriculture strategy
- Engaging / choosing other stakeholder
- Next step, guide, shared knowledge and experience, and networking for collaboration

- Processing the e-Agriculture guideline in the country, knowledge, M&E mechanism
- Conceptual + systematic thinking of strategy planning
- How to get stakeholders to participate and sharing
- Direction of next step for strategic implementation
- Need to break Ministry/Dept silos
- Systematic approach to prepare a strategic plan
- Motivations to accelerate ICT activities
- Link with ICT officials in other countries
- Priority your need
- Hood practices in other countries
- Different ICT technologies

6.2 To what extent you think the guide is relevant and adaptable to your country?

- To large extent, as we started the process but were beating about the bush, the guide is key
- Its adaptability – one can take any portion of it any implement
- Very relevant and adaptable
- Relevance adaptation; devil is in the details, time and money needed; should start with existing basis
- The guide in largely flexible and universal so that it could be easily adapted to any country situation
- Still keep relationship and update to each other for any e- Agriculture activities in each country
- Learn how to integrate the existing strategy and plan to be more consolidate as national agenda
- It will be foundation of future activities. This will push everybody to implement integrated programme
- Very comprehensive but require little addition and deletion to country requirement
- Importance of Intergovernmental Organisations collaborating across their areas of expertise
- Not fully convinced of a need for separate e-Agriculture Strategy but would be useful for agriculture component of ICT policy or agriculture policy

6.3 How do you think the meeting went? What could have been improved?

- Chart/talkshows/open discussions
- The workshop takes much time of talking. Time keeper has to be more sharp.
- The meeting went very well. There should however be more time for interaction
- Very well planned but next time avail adequate period to exhaust almost everything
- Excellent, time appropriate
- Some of the context was complex, for the workshop of only 3 days. More simple and practical in relation to time
- clearer than guide, excel sheet to be adapted as shown, nice collaboration
- It is better to have print/digital documents regarding success/failure stories
- To start at 9:00 am.
- Exceeded expectations.
- Useful info for government officials
- Meeting went well
- Thoroughly enjoyed and gained new knowledge
- Very well : there is always room for improvement
- Future could have been done in a more realistic way using other method
- Meeting went well. If anything that could have been improved was having more time or shorter agenda
- Techniques of strategy formation

7   CLOSING SESSION

The meeting ended with closing remarks from

- Mr. Ken Lohento, ICT4D Programme Coordinator, CTA
- Mr. Hani Eskandar, ICT Applications Division, ITU
- Mr. Mr Villi A. Fuavao, Deputy Regional Representative, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

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ANNEX 2: AGENDA

3 MARCH (DAY-1)	
0800-0830	REGISTRATION
0830-0945	- Mr. Ken Lohento, ICT4D Programme Coordinator, CTA - Mr. Ioane Koroivuki, Regional Director, ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific - Dr Hiroyuki Konuma, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Workshop Objectives – Gerard Sylvester INTRODUCTION OF ALL PARTICIPANTS + EXPECTATIONS GROUP PHOTO **Session Coordinator:** Ashish Narayan
0945-1000	COFFEE BREAK
OBJECTIVE: Establishing a national e-Agriculture vision *(refer Part I of the strategy guide)*	
SESSION 1: Framework of national e-Agriculture vision, national e-Agriculture strategy development and stakeholders engagement	
1000-1130	**Objectives:** - To understand the overall structure of the guide and the strategy development methodology - To understand the Agriculture ecosystem, the value chain and how e-Agriculture can contribute to Agriculture development and overall development objectives. - To comprehend the framework required for a national e-Agriculture vision. - To understand the strategy development process management, the e-Agriculture stakeholders and approaches for effective engagement. **Working Groups:** • Potential benefits of e-Agriculture across value chains (Chapter 1) • Governance structure and mechanisms (Chapter 3.2) • Identifying Stakeholders (Chapter 4) **Session facilitator:** Hani Eskandar **Modalities:** Presentation

SESSION 2: Strategic context, e-Agriculture outcomes, National e-Agriculture vision	
1130-1230	**Objectives:** - To understand the strategic context that describes the priority agriculture system goals and challenges that an e-Agriculture strategy will address - Define desired e-Agriculture outcomes - Draft an e-Agriculture vision **Working Groups:** • Agriculture strategy goals, and priorities (Chapter 5) • Examples of e-Ag outcomes & drafting initial e-Agriculture vision (Chapter 7) • e-Agriculture vision for stakeholders **Session facilitator:** Gerard Sylvester **Modalities:** Presentation, Hand-outs
1230-1330	LUNCH BREAK
SESSION 3: e-Agriculture components	
1330-1530	**Objectives**: - To understand the key components comprising e-agriculture environment - To learn about examples of what each component would include **Working Groups:** • Leadership & Governance – Strategy & Investment (Chapter 8) • Services & Applications – Workforce • Infrastructure - Standards & Interoperability • Knowledge Management, Sharing and Advisory Services – • Legislation, policy and compliance **Session facilitator:** Ken Lohento **Modalities:** Brief presentation followed by the World Cafe
1530-1545	*Working* COFFEE BREAK
1545-1645	Plenary for Session 3 **Modalities:** Brief presentation from the 4 groups followed by an open discussion

4 MARCH (DAY-2)

	OBJECTIVE: Developing a national e-Agriculture action plan *(refer Part II of the strategy guide)*
0830-0900	Recap of Day 1 **Session coordinator:** Hani Eskandar

SESSION 4: e-Agriculture stakeholder presentations

0900-1030	**Objective:** - To share e-agriculture experiences in countries (Chapter 6) • e-Agriculture projects from Asia & the Pacific (Jos) • LIRNEAsia (Rohan)Agriculture trends and lessons learned, CTA (Ken) • e-agriculture in Near East and North Africa, FAO (Magdi) • CABI (Sharbendu) **Session facilitator:** Sophie Treinen **Modalities:** Chat/Talk show followed by wrap-up of session facilitator
1030-1045	COFFEE BREAK

SESSION 5: e-Agriculture stakeholder presentations (continued)

1045-1215	**Objective:** - To share e-agriculture deployment experiences in countries (Chapter 6) • Côte d'Ivoire • Sri Lanka • Bhutan • Lao PDR • Thailand • Ghana • Rwanda • Kenya **Session facilitators:** Latif Magdi & Justine Chisenga **Modalities:** Very brief presentation followed by a chat/talk show
1215-1315	LUNCH BREAK

SESSION 6: Strategic recommendations, e-Agriculture action plan framework and action lines	
315-1415	**Objective:** - To understand how to frame Strategic Recommendations - To understand the framework for an action plan and its development process, e.g., Action Lines, Action Lines Outputs and activities required **Working Groups (excel sheet):** Examples of e-Agriculture activities: • Governance Activities • Foundation Activities • Solutions Activities • Change and Adoption Activities **Session facilitator:** Ashish Narayan **Modalities:** Open Space with 4 groups divided on the above e-Ag activities
SESSION 7: Defining implementation phases	
1415-1445	**Objective:** - To develop the implementation phases of national e-Agriculture Strategy - To develop targets for each implementation phase **Working Groups:** • Identifying implementation phases (Chapter 7) • Describe targets for each implementation phases • Definition terms in the guide (Appendix G) **Session facilitator:** Gerard Sylvester **Modalities:** Presentation & Open discussion
SESSION 8: Developing sectoral e-Agriculture strategy	

1445-1700	**Objective:** - To discuss the intricacies in the development of sectoral e-Agriculture strategy (ex., in fisheries, forestry etc.,) **Session facilitator:** Ken Lohento **Modalities:** World café'
1500-1515	*Working* COFFEE BREAK

5 MARCH (DAY-3)
OBJECTIVE: Monitoring and Evaluation *(refer Part III of the strategy guide)*

0830-0900	Recap of Day 2 **Session coordinator:** Hani Eskandar

SESSION 9: Framework for e-Agriculture monitoring and evaluation

0900-1015	**Objective:** - To describing the framework for e-agriculture M&E, e.g., indicators, targets and governance. - To learn about output and outcome indicators **Working Groups** • Output and Outcome indicators (Chapter 3) • Linking outputs to outcomes • Target measures for output and outcome indicators **Session facilitator:** Josh Woodard **Modalities:** Presentation/ Open discussion
1015-1030	COFFEE BREAK

SESSION 10: M&E governance & processes, summary of the methodology

1030-1230	**Objective:** - To provide an understanding of the supporting M&E governance and processes - To summarize the overall methodology - Discuss next steps and follow-up actions - Possible collaboration with partners on the follow-up **Session facilitator:** Hani Eskandar
1230-1330	LUNCH BREAK

SESSION 11: Way Forward - Discussion and conclusion	
1330-1430	• Discussion on national level customization of the guide • Feedback • Conclusion
1430-1530	COFFEE BREAK
1530	- Mr. Ken Lohento, ICT4D Programme Coordinator, CTA - Mr. Hani Eskander, ITU - Mr Vili Fuavao, Deputy Regional Respresentative, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific **Session Coordinator:** Ashish Narayan