

Modernizing Extension and Advisory Services

Exploring the promise of ICTs for women farmers

MEAS Symposium 2013
The Role of Extension and
Advisory Services in Improving
Livelihoods and Food Security –
Evidence from the Field

Washington, D.C., June 6, 2013

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Barriers limiting women's access to EAS

- Perceptions about who is a farmer
- Design and delivery of services
 - Access to appropriate informational channels
 - Time and mobility constraints
 - Differing levels of education and literacy
- Capacity

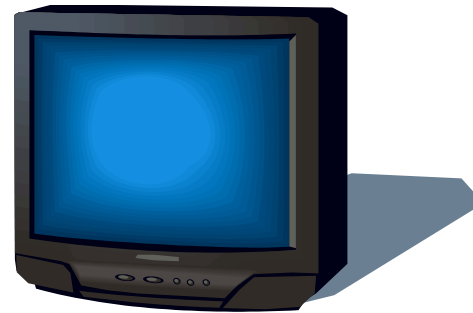


Key constraints restricting women's access to ICTs



- Lack of financial resources
- Higher levels of technological and language illiteracy
- Norms that discourage women and girls from using technology
- Lack of control over and ownership of technology

What promise do ICTs hold for overcoming information barriers women face?



Case Study

- November 2012
- Interviews with key stakeholders including farmers, extension officers, m-agriculture initiatives
- Men and women farmers in Nakuru and Thika



Key Findings

How do men and women access agricultural information?

- Reach out to specific informants for different kinds of agricultural information
- Women's information channels reflect limited time and mobility

Women and men farmers consider agricultural information reliable when,

- It comes from perceived experts.
- It comes from individuals in their social network.
- They can “see” that it is useful.
- They can assess the quality of it for themselves.

How do men and women farmers use ICTs for their farming activities?

- Radios, mobile phones, TV are used for both farming and personal activities
- Connect with informants in their respective networks
- Prefer making phone calls
- Prefer radio



Lessons Learned

- Women's access to and control over mobile phones is key
- Human + technology = (likely) SUCCESS!
- Strengthen information intermediaries
- Do not overlook spouses



Additional resources

- [Reducing the Gender Gap in Extension and Advisory Services: How to Find the Best Fit for Men and Women Farmers](#)
- [Extending the Benefits: Gender-Equitable ICT-Enabled Agricultural Development](#)

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