



ICT Options to Enhance Agricultural Extension

Info Sheet

Information and Communication Technology, ICT can be used in a range of forms to support extension. The best use will likely involve integration across a range of options combined with traditional approaches (e.g., field demonstrations). Options in green (shaded) are considered the most promising.

	Information communication technology and tools*				
Extension function	Radio	TV and videos	Cell phones (text, voice)	Feature and Smart devices	Computer + internet
Identifying farmers' problems and opportunities – Who do they need and want?					
Diagnose problems	Some potential if dealing with general problems, or if capacity for interaction and expertise available	Visuals are very helpful as “seeing is believing”. Even better if combined with ways to receive feedback.	Some potential if farmers can call or text in and sufficient expertise is available.	Additional potential to a simple cell phone as it enables web or App access to special diagnostic tools.	Good comprehensive diagnostic tools are available
Collect information	Some potential if capacity for interaction		Can use for data collection.	Good for data collection with GPS.	Some potential if internet available.
Promoting behavior change – What is practical and relevant to meet the needs?					
Raise aware of general opportunities or needs ; convince farmers to try something new	Very good especially with persuasive programming	Visuals are usually very helpful as “seeing is believing”	Is an option if users are registered to receive such messages (SMS)	Is an option if users are registered to receive such messages (SMS, email)	Is an option if users are registered to receive such messages (SMS, email)
Provide specific information needed for change. what's involved and the benefits; demonstrate or train	Some potential – but limited information delivered. Can be enhanced with call in.	Good option as “seeing is believing”	Potential if farmers can call or text in and sufficient expertise is available	Additional potential to a simple cell phone as it enables web access and plays videos.	Good option for intermediaries to seek information and videos.
Facilitate access to credit and inputs			Mobile banking and negotiate directly with the suppliers	Mobile banking and negotiate directly with the suppliers	Online banking
Link farmers to markets	Good for providing general price reports		Access to price information (call in, subscription)	Can bring potential buyers and producers together; access price information	Can bring potential buyers and producers together; price info.
Collect feedback – How can each step be improved?					
Collect and respond to farmer feedback	Good if producers can call or text and sufficient expertise is available		Some potential if farmers can call or text in and sufficient expertise is available	Good option for intermediaries to seek information (if optimized for smart devices)	Good option for intermediaries to seek information
Assist with business planning	Some potential	Some potential		Simple farm management “Apps”; record keeping	farm management tools; record keeping