



THE E-AGRICULTURE COMMUNITY

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About e-Agriculture



A global Community of Practice.

People from all over the world exchange information, ideas, and resources related to the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) for sustainable agriculture and rural development



Origin of the Community



The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in 2003/5 identified “e-Agriculture” as an Action Line in the Plan of Action, referenced to the MDGs.

Annual reports provided to the WSIS Forum hosted by ITU, UNDP and UNESCO, and to the CSTD.



www.wsis.org/stocktaking

Extend your network • Create Partnerships • Provide more visibility & value to your projects at the global level • Be part of WSIS Stocktaking report • Use the new options • Communicate



Founding Partners (2006)



Members – Individuals



- Information and communication specialists
- Researchers
- Farmers
- NGO staff
- Students
- Policy makers
- Business people
- Development practitioners and others



Share Knowledge & Learn



- Contribute to meetings/events
 - ▣ WSIS Forum with IFAD, ITU, UNCTAD, ITC
 - ▣ World Bank 4th Global Forum on Innovation & Technology Entrepreneurship
- Develop key publications:
 - ▣ *“ICT in Agriculture”* Sourcebook (World Bank)
 - ▣ *“Information Economy Report”* (UNCTAD, IFAD, WFP)
- Offer training courses in ICT skills through IMARK partnership

Discuss Key Issues



In 3 years, more than 24,000 people have participated in and visited e-Agriculture's online discussions.

Results:

- Policy briefs on key topics
- Foster new partnerships
- Identify challenges and propose solutions
- Share good practices
- Develop policy/practice frameworks and models



Focus on Key Topics



Mobile phones in rural areas

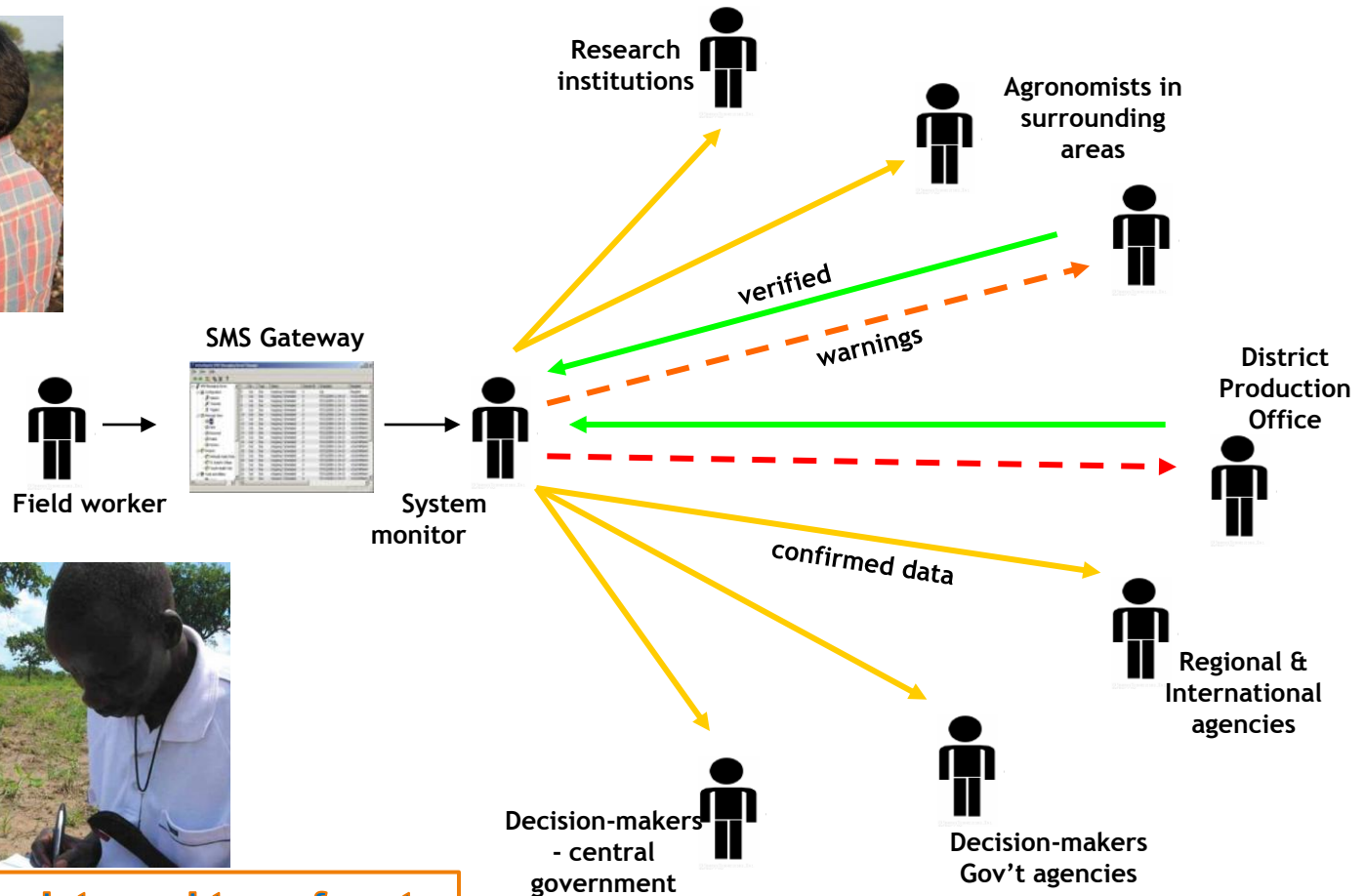
The potential of mobile technology to benefit rural communities and improve food security is certain.

In 2000, 25% of all mobile phones were in developing countries.

Today 75% of all mobile phones are in developing countries.



Mobiles in FAO: Pest Surveillance



Anoto

Digital pen stores data and transfers to mobile phone using Bluetooth

Share Lessons Learned



Effective Use of Mobile Technologies

- Test local knowledge gathering initiatives rigorously to derive workable business models
- Ensure the technologies continue to work despite practical difficulties e.g. sand, humidity, heat, screen size / quality
- Be sensitive when introducing unfamiliar technologies and formats
- Build in clear local benefits and avoid purely “extractive” approaches – e.g. aggregating data for national or regional purposes
- Ensure space for all interested parties e.g. research, private sector service providers, handset providers

The Reality: too many projects remain focused on
(a) the technology and (b) external (donor) demands

The Way Forward



- continue to grow the Community's membership and content as a unique "State of Practice" resource
- Seek strategic partnerships linking the Community to key rural ICT projects
- Develop a common framework for impact assessment
- Obtain new resources to support growth





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