



SCALING UP INTERACTIVE ICT TO INCREASE AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION IN TANZANIA

Locations Tanzania

Dates 01/06/2016 - 30/06/2019

Summary

Despite Tanzania's immense agricultural potential, farm productivity is hindered by inadequate knowledge and customary practices on farm management. The project Upscaling Technologies in Agriculture through Knowledge Extension (UPTAKE) targets small-scale farmers through geographical mobile and radio campaigns on improved agricultural technologies and approaches.

The problem

More than two thirds of Tanzania's population depends on small scale agriculture for employment and livelihoods. Despite reliance on the sector, farmers are slow to adopt agricultural technologies and so productivity is low.

Dissemination of these technologies is ineffective owing to the weak links between research and extension in a system which is thinly spread out, supply driven and faces poor organization and coordination.

What we are doing

The vision is for Tanzania to become a hub of ICT infrastructure and solutions that enhance socio-economic development.

Led by Farm Radio International, UPTAKE is working with partners in the radio and telecommunications industry to share agricultural innovations with one million farmers. The project is taking proven agricultural technologies and packaging the information into radio, voice and SMS campaigns which enhance traditional extension approaches. 150,000 farmers, 40% of whom are female, are expected to adopt the promoted technologies contributing to increased productivity. Extension services will be supported to enable consistent use by farmers.

Extension support material will be available on the African Soil Health Consortium (ASHC) website to support extension officers to incorporate ICT approaches into their service delivery. The project is meanwhile engaging telecoms and radio industry players on developing sustainable models for ICT enhanced information sharing with farmers. UPTAKE will work with partners to ensure that 400,000 women farmers receive information and 60,000 women farmers adopt new technologies, constituting 40% of the total project targets.

Key project activities are:

- developing content on crops and technologies
- mobile and radio campaigns
- support to extension services
- establishing partnerships for sustainability

Results so far

Over 265,000 short messages (SMS) on cassava and maize agronomy have been disseminated to over 16,000 farmers in Tanzania's Eastern and Southern Highland zones so far. The farmers voluntarily registered for the SMS resource. 34% of farmers in the Eastern Zone were female and 17.5% were less than 30 years making considerable progress towards meeting the project's targets.

Overall, there has been increased farmer awareness and demand of higher yielding and more disease resistant varieties of cassava evidenced by inquiries about sources of improved planting materials received on the interactive radio and mobile platforms during the joint campaigns.

This has in turn triggered more farmers to venture into multiplication of planting materials thereby increasing suppliers of improved varieties and diversifying sources of income.

Donors

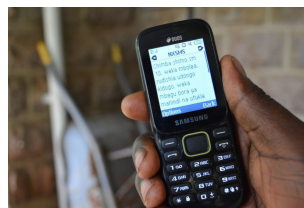
IFAD, New Alliance ICT Extension Challenge Fund

Partners

Farm Radio International (FRI)

CABI Project Manager

Daniel Karanja



<https://www.cabi.org/what-we-do/cabi-projects/>