

agInfo -> agStrategy : incorporating information into livelihood strategies

Sriganesh Lokanathan

www.LIRNEasia.net, [sriganesh\[at\]lirneasia.net](mailto:sriganesh@lirneasia.net)

LIRNEasia@5: research -> policy -> knowledge-based economies

Colombo, Sri Lanka

December 11, 2009

Information needs of the rural poor

- Rural poor have diverse information needs:
 - availability of jobs;
 - market information (prices, locations, agricultural inputs);
 - access to government programs and services; maintaining social networks;
 - etc.
- Importantly, information they want information that is ***reliable*** & of ***good quality***.

But what do they really care about?

- Rural poor care about their livelihood strategies
- They come up with strategies by:
 - Combining the assets they can access,
 - taking into account their vulnerability contexts,
 - and supported by policies, institutions & processes

To lead to.....

- livelihood outcomes

So if we know what they want, how do we fulfill their needs?

- Functional information will need to be fulfilled by:
 - Provision of *relevant locally generated* content in *local languages*
 - Providing *demand-driven* information
 - Use of *participatory approaches*
 - Articulating information needs
 - Generating information
 - Disseminating information
- Enable them to improve their livelihood strategies.

How do the rural poor consume ICTs in their livelihoods

- The poor incorporate ICTs into their livelihood strategies & decisions
 - They use it to reduce their vulnerabilities, so long as they can get ***actionable information*** via ICTs
- Hence ICTs ***facilitate*** decision making by the poor.

What about choice of technology?

- No standardized “*one-technology-fits-all*” solution
- Technology choice should be demand-driven
 - Leveraging their media preferences and not ours
- Build on existing technical and organizational systems
 - Build on existing policy, institutional and legislative contexts of the local region

What have we done?

- Explored a range of technologies through pilot projects to provide market prices (GGS)
- Found out how the rural BOP use ICTs (T@BOP)
- **Next:** GGS 1.0 -> GGS 2.0