



The Govi Gnana Service  
a unique ICT for development initiative  
to fight agricultural poverty  
in Sri Lanka

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e-development labs and LIRNEasia

CTO Forum: ICT for Business and Development

20-21, September 2004  
Colombo, Sri Lanka

# Context

- Govi Gnana Service is an e-Sri Lanka pilot project of the ICTA Agency.
  - Conceptualized, designed, developed and implemented by e-development labs with technology by Interblocks.





# Presentation structure

- Background to problem
- GGS as a possible solution
- The GGS pilot
- Lessons
- Way forward



# Poverty and agriculture

- In Sri Lanka, vast majority of all poor households depend on agriculture for their livelihood.
  - Failed government policy
  - Lack of market participation

# Can it be helped?

- Irrigation, import policy, seed, fertilizer, R&D, extension services are all contributing...
  - Individual farmer *cannot* influence
  - Government to initiate change
- But, crop planning, produce marketing, and credit is critical
  - Individual farmer *can* change situation
  - Need tools



# Where does ICT fit in?

- Bridge information asymmetry in
  - Crop planning
    - Poor analysis of expected demand and supply
    - Little knowledge of possible forward contracts
  - Produce marketing
    - Little knowledge of spot prices and buyers
  - Extension services
    - Hardly any advise from extension officers: weather, fertilizer, disease prevention etc.
  - Agriculture credit facilitation
    - No platform for FSC scheme [including crop loans to farmers from banks by collateralizing contract]

# GGGS

- An ICT intervention to increase farmer income by
  - improving crop planning, and
  - increasing marketing efficiency
  - also helping credit facilitation through FSC



# GGs pilot at DDEZ

## Key strengths

- [Perfect location](#)
- Largest wholesale market
  - 143 Traders
  - 30 - 40m/day
  - > 500 trucks/day
- Successful
  - Private enterprise
  - Commission system
- Catalyst
  - FSC

## Key weaknesses

- Information asymmetry
  - No price display
  - Farmers unaware of best price to sell
  - Traders have network
  - Commission system
- Result → farmers do not get best spot price
  - No platform for FSC information exchange





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# GGG pilot objectives

If produce already brought to DDEZ market

→ Help farmer get best possible price

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If produce harvested, but not brought to DDEZ

→ Help farmer decide whether to bring to DDEZ or not

If produce just about to be harvested

→ Help farmer decide whether to harvest today or tomorrow or day after

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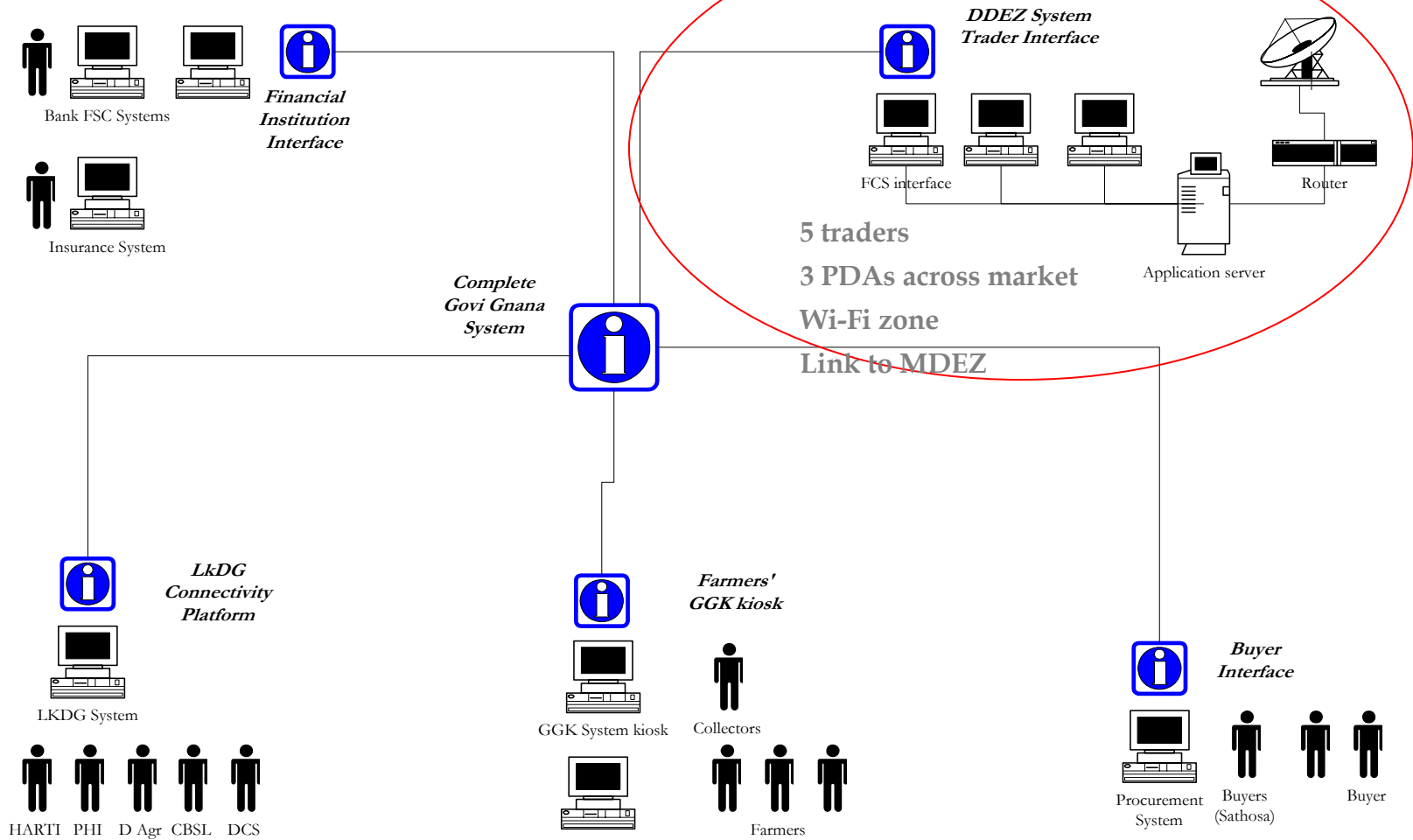
If not planted, or many days to harvest

→ Help farmer enter into FSC

# Then: Information darkness



# The GGS info-structure: DDEZ



# Now: Help get best price



Lowest price and time

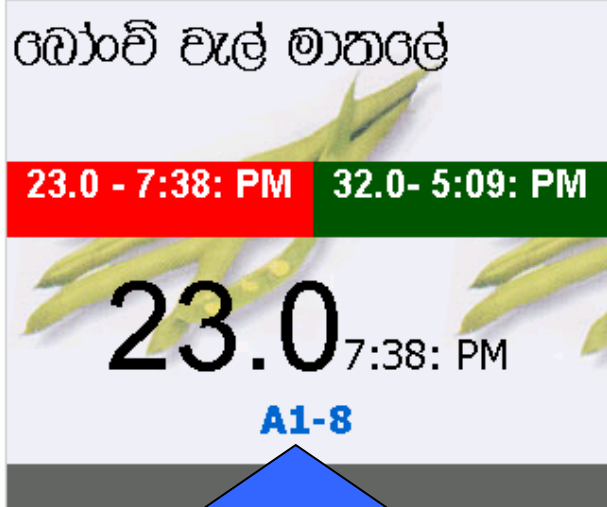


බොවි වැල මාතලේ

23.0 - 7:38: PM 32.0 - 5:09: PM

23.0 7:38: PM

A1-8



Highest price and time



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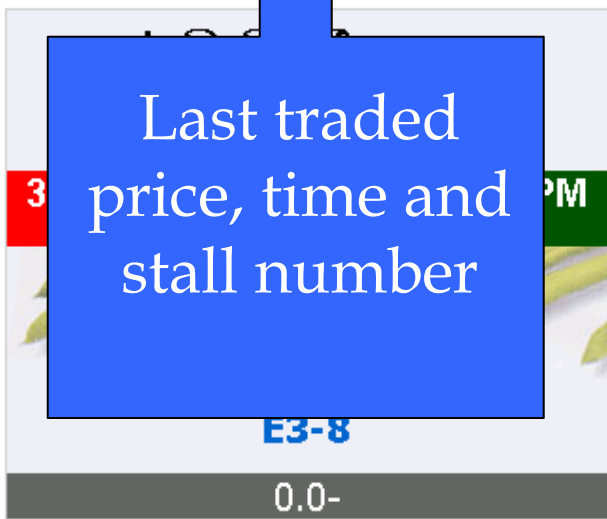


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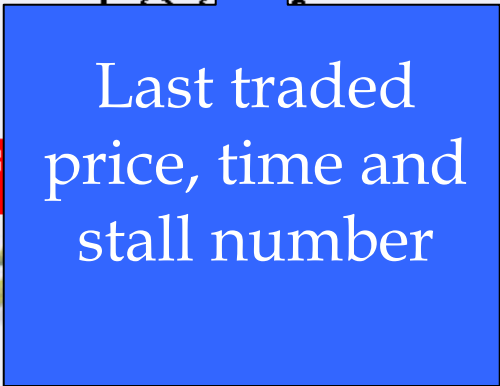
3

0.0

0.0-



Last traded price, time and stall number



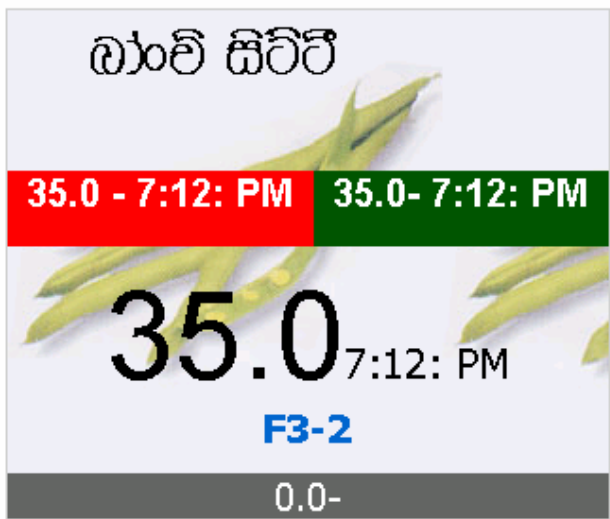
බොවි සිරිවි

35.0 - 7:12: PM 35.0 - 7:12: PM

35.0 7:12: PM

F3-2

0.0-




Microsoft Internet Explorer window showing a market price page with six panels for different produce items.

Item Name (Sinhala)	Current Price	Previous Price	Unit
ඕ ඕ කඳු කපා- දෙ ඹ ශ	5.0	7:30: PM	E3-4
ඕ ඕ කඳු කපා- දෙ ඹ ශ	4.0 - 6:51: PM	5.0 - 7:30: PM	0.0-
ඕ ඕ කඳු කපා මැලේසියන්	7.0	8:49: PM	D2-1
ඕ ඕ කඳු කපා මැලේසියන්	6.0 - 4:31: PM	7.0 - 8:49: PM	0.0-
ඕ ඕ කඳු කපා මාලු	0.0		0.0-
ඕ ඕ කඳු කපා මාලු	0.0 -	0.0-	0.0-
චට්ටකකා ලොකු	5.0	8:50: PM	A2-4
චට්ටකකා ලොකු	5.0 - 8:50: PM	7.0 - 6:34: PM	0.0-
චට්ටකකා මීමිනි	10.0	7:37: PM	A1-7
චට්ටකකා මීමිනි	10.0 - 7:37: PM	10.0 - 7:37: PM	0.0-
චට්ටකකා මැලේසියන්	17.0	7:41: PM	A1-8
චට්ටකකා මැලේසියන්	16.0 - 4:56: PM	18.0 - 7:14: PM	0.0-

Windows taskbar shows: Start, Internet Explorer, Outlook (Inbox - Mic...), Govi Gnan..., Yahoo! Mai..., Telecom R..., Microsoft P..., nangi - Me..., Untitled D..., System tray: Internet, 9:46 AM.

තක්කාලි ලණචාරවෙල




0.0 - 0.0-

**0.0**

0.0-

තක්කාලි මාතලේ



28.0 - 6:27: PM 34.0- 5:20: PM

**28.0** 6:27: PM

**E3-4**

0.0-

තක්කාලි තිලිණ



34.0 - 7:10: PM 34.0- 7:10: PM

**34.0** 7:10: PM

**F3-2**

0.0-

මාළුමිරිස් කොළපාට රාගල



63.0 - 7:21: PM 63.0- 7:21: PM

**63.0** 7:21: PM

**F2-7**

0.0-

මාළුමිරිස් කොළපාට පුත්තලම



53.0 - 6:55: PM 53.0- 6:55: PM

**53.0** 6:55: PM

**E3-8**

0.0-

මාළුමිරිස් කහපාට රාගල



0.0 - 0.0-

**0.0**

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Microsoft Internet Explorer window showing a market price page with six panels of data in Sinhala.

Address: [http://220.247.211.98:9080/gss/view\\_market\\_price\\_frameset.html](http://220.247.211.98:9080/gss/view_market_price_frameset.html)

Item Name (Sinhala)	Current Price	Time	Code
කරවිල කටු නිත්තවේලි	30.0	5:16: PM	E3-4
කරවිල කටු මැලේකියන්	32.0	6:44: PM	F1-4
කරවිල දුර නිත්තවේලි	30.0	4:28: PM	E3-4
කරවිල දුර මැලේකියන්	30.0	8:49: PM	D2-1
එම් රොටු ලේ න් ඉරි බණචාරවෙල	0.0		
එම් රොටු බණචාරවෙල	0.0		

Taskbar: Start, Internet Explorer, Inbox - Mic..., Govi Gnan..., Yahoo! Mai..., Telecom R..., Microsoft P..., nangi - Me..., Untitled D..., 9:44 AM



# Dissemination outside DDEZ

- Internet
  - [www.ggs.lk](http://www.ggs.lk)
  - 100 rural VGK by 2004-5 → snowball
- Telephone
  - [066 228 3180](tel:0662283180)
  - Pending 221
  - Calendars
- Pending radio and television

# ගොවි දැනුම විකාශන

## GGG: Govi Gnana [farmer knowledge] System

සිංහල අකුරු ලබාගැනීමට  
Download Sinhala fonts here



තොරතුරු හා සන්නිවේදන තාක්ෂණය භාවිතයෙන් කෘෂිකාර්මික අංශවිකරණයේ කාර්යක්ෂමතාවය වර්ධනය කිරීම මගින් ගොවි මහතා වෙත ස්ථාවර හා ඉහළ ආදායමක් ලබාදීමේ ක්‍රියාමාර්ගය මුලික වශයෙන් ගොවි දැනුම ව්‍යාපාරිකයයි.

මෙම ව්‍යාපාරිකයේ පළමු අදියර ශ්‍රී ලංකා තොරතුරු, සන්නිවේදන හා තාක්ෂණික ආයතනය, භාෂිත කටයුතු සම්බන්ධ අමාත්‍යාංශය සහ ශ්‍රී ලංකා මහ බැංකුව සමඟ එක්ව දැනුම හා මානව වාසන ආර්ථික මධ්‍යස්ථාන ප්‍රමුඛ කොටසෙන් සියලු ව්‍යාපාරිකයන් ලෙස ක්‍රියාත්මක වේ.

Welcome to GGS, an ICT solution to help farmers and traders improve efficiency in agriculture marketing. The first phase of GGS is now being implemented at the Dambulla and Meegoda Dedicated Economic Zones under the pilot project programme of the ICT Agency. GGS is also supported by Ministry of Rural Economy and the Central Bank of Sri Lanka.

### දැන් පවතින මිල Spot price

- දඹුල්ල Dambulla
- මීගොඩ Meegoda

### ඉදිරි වෙළඳ මිල Forward price

සංස්කරණය වෙමින් පවතී  
Under construction

හිඳුණ:  
මිල විස්තරය  
Click here  
for example

GGS was conceptualised and now being designed by e-development labs. Interblocks is responsible for developing the software slotution while PricewaterhouseCoopers Lanka is managing the pilot project implementation. The pilot is funded by ICTA with World Bank support.

# FSC platform

- Govi Sahanaya programme
  - FSC introduced by CBSL in 1999
  - Certainty
  - Growing rapidly last year and a half
  - 71,000 FSC so far → but, less than 8% of 2003 paddy crop
- Problem is dissemination platform
- Solution is GGS: FSC platform, just implemented



# Objective...



Source: CBSL

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>> 
  
 22 July 2004      22 August 2004

**ගැනුම්කරු:**

එළවළු වර්ගය/අයිතමය	ප්‍රමාණය	ඇඳවුම් මිල රු/1කිලෝ	අපේක්ෂිත දිනය
▶ පි පි සු සු- රජ ඊ ඊ	200.0	35.0	2004-08-15
▶ පි පි සු සු- රජ ඊ ඊ	50.0	40.0	2004-08-15
▶ පි පි සු සු- රජ ඊ ඊ	50.0	35.0	2004-08-16
▶ පිපිසුණු පාලනකරු	80.0	38.0	2004-08-16
▶ පිපිසුණු පාලනකරු	100.0	36.0	2004-08-16
▶ පි පි සු සු- රජ ඊ ඊ	100.0	35.0	2004-08-15

**ගැනුම්කරුගේ විස්තරය**

එළවළු වර්ගය/අයිතමය	ප්‍රමාණය	ඇඳවුම් මිල රු/1කිලෝ	අපේක්ෂිත දිනය
පි පි සු සු- රජ ඊ ඊ	50.0	35.0	2004-08-16

**විස්තරය**

නම : T.M Kapila  
 දුරකථන : 06655475 , ,  
 පහසුකම් සපයන්නා : F005 - Bank of Ceylon -Col  
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 සම්පූර්ණ කල ප්‍රමාණය : 150.0  
 ඉතිරි ප්‍රමාණය : 50.0

එළවුණු දිනය :

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 22 July 2004      22 July 2004

**විකුණුම්කරු:**

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	0.0	0.0	null

**විකුණුම්කරුගේ විස්තරය**

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	0.0	0.0	null

**විස්තරය**

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එළවුණු දිනය :

# Lessons

- Huge difference between e-concepts and implementing even a simple ICT 4 Development initiative
  - Farmers are not e-people
  - “boru kathaa”
- Flexibility
  - From failed attempt → to projector on a rope
- Need long-term commitment
  - Learning curve is almost flat
    - Changing curve since June-July
      - story 1: check the price...
      - story 2: chilies!
    - Cannot expect overnight benefits
      - Story 1: Care
      - Story 2: working on EGB



# Not interested...







# Tell me more...



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# Way forward

- Pilot: *No revenue model*
  - Run until early 2005 → ready to scale up
  - Establish outlet at Jaffna
    - Location identified, Tamil translation → October 2004
- Scale up: *Transaction and subscription based revenue model*
  - Connect all 143 stalls
  - Connect all Economic Zones and markets
  - FSC → Wholesale buyers and Farm organizations  
*[transaction based revenue]*
  - Primary VGK service *[subscription based revenue]*
    - Personalized small agri-business office
      - negotiate FSCs, export orders...
    - Local information: crops, weather, fertilizer, purchasing...
    - DoA cyber extension point





# Acknowledgements

ICT Agency of Sri Lanka  
The World Bank  
Central Bank of Sri Lanka  
Ministry of Small and Rural Industries  
Atlantis One Technologies  
CIC Agri-business  
Dialog GSM  
Celltel Lanka  
Care International



A close-up photograph of several rice panicles (grain heads) hanging from a green stem. The grains are a light brown color, and the background is a soft, out-of-focus green and yellow, suggesting a field of rice. The lighting is bright, creating a warm, golden glow.

# The Govi Gnana Service

*already making a difference*

to be continued...

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