

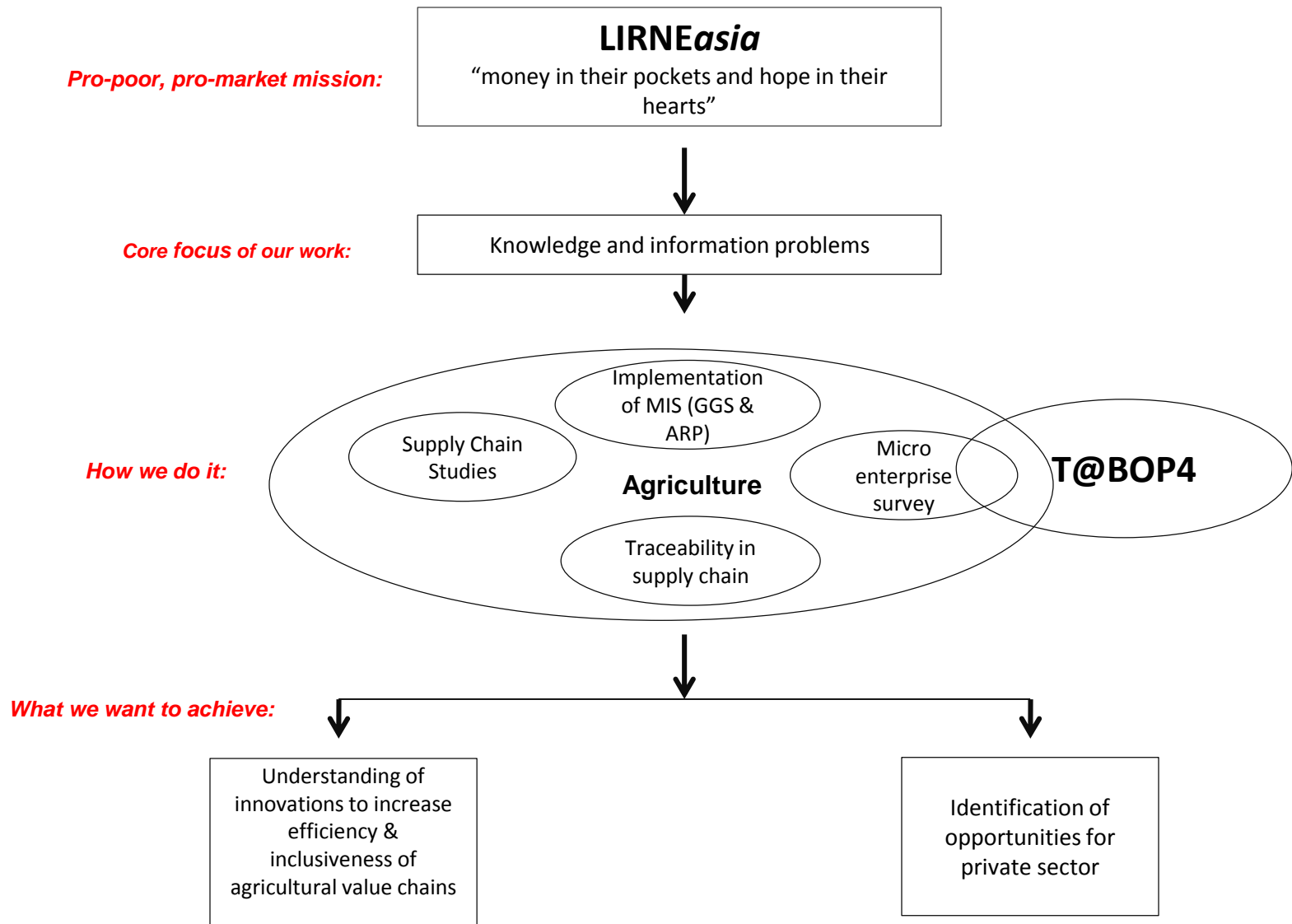
# Challenges and Myths of ICT4D: Information and knowledge transfers in Agriculture

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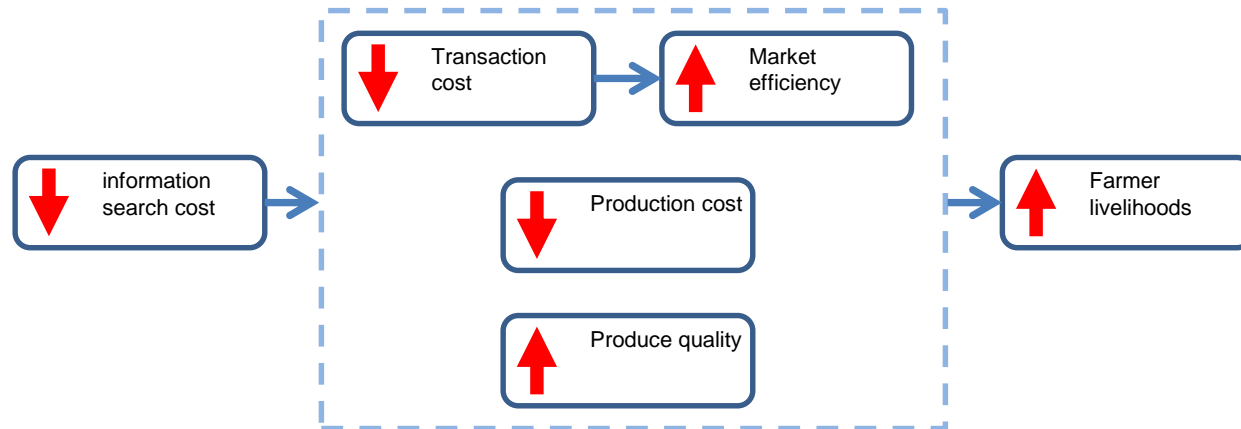
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# What do we know?

- ICTs can't solve all the problems
  - E.g. land reforms
- Farmers and intermediaries exhibit varied information and knowledge seeking behavior
- ICTs can potentially reduce information search costs



- ICTs can potentially reduce enforcement and monitoring cost
  - Via introduction of traceability

# However there are limitations

- Potential does not always translate to opportunity
- Inability to recognise limitations leads to the creation of myths
  - Build and they will come
  - Availability of market information will lead to efficient markets and better prices

# Myth 1: Build and they will come

- Take up of AgMIS services isn't expected levels
  - Cost of the services
    - Should it be a pull or push service?
  - Relevance of information provided
    - Does information reflect quality standards?
  - Timeliness of information provided by these service
    - Are market price information required by farmers throughout the year?

# Myth 1 Contd...

- Reliability and accuracy of the information available
  - Do the farmers trust the information they receive?
  - Are there problems with collection (including sampling)

	<b>IKSL, India</b>	<b>RML, India</b>	<b>Tradenet , Sri Lanka</b>	<b>IVR system, Bhutan</b>
<b>How is data collected?</b>	•Through the auctioneers in the mundi's	•Through dedicated price collectors employed by RML at the market they cover	•Through dedicated price collectors employed by GGS at the market they cover	•Collected through auctions under the Food Corporation of Bhutan

# Myth 2: Availability of market information leads to efficient markets and better prices

- Access to information does not mean the farmers can always make use of the information
  - Distance from markets
  - Variations in quality standards
  - Access to transportation
  - Availability of cold storage and warehousing
  - Access to financing to decrease the dependency on intermediaries
  - Lack of incentives among the stakeholders

Large consumer demand for traceability (conducive for ICT application), but less use upstream:

*Gherkins case study in Sri Lanka (2007)*

- Pilot project on Gherkins with contract farmers for HJS Condiments in Sri Lanka
  - Farmers given phones
  - Hayley's sent information (via SMS) on farmer's potential revenue as well as problems with quality of the produce.
- But incentives were off
  - Center manager who pre-buys from farmers faces the brunt for rejects by HJS
  - Farmers aren't paid a higher amount for greater quality.



# Understand that it is an eco-system

- Finding financing mechanisms
  - Use of mobile money
- Need to build the infrastructure
- Setting up standards
- Identify incentives for long term sustainability

# Thank you

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For more information

<http://lirneasia.net/projects/agriculture/>