



## Can mobile phones improve agricultural productivity, resilience and food security?

**Date:** 29<sup>th</sup> May 2012, 08.30 - 12.30

**Location:** Hörsalen, Sida, Valhallavägen 199, Stockholm

**Moderator:** *Matthew Fielding, SIANI*

**Speakers:** *Karin Svingby, Ericsson; Anne-Charlotte Malm, Sida; Daniel Ninsiima, L3F Uganda; Theresa Stanton, IICD*

Mobile technology offers a smart way to support rural agricultural development by providing information direct to farmers. To farmers who do not have physical or financial access to information through current extension services, mobile phones and applications can act as a conduit for locally relevant information. If the support package is right, there are huge opportunities for improvements in agricultural productivity, livelihood resilience and future food security.

Increases in agricultural production benefit both the local farmer and helps food supply keep pace with population growth. Agricultural support services assist farmers in adapting to climate change with new cultivation techniques, follow market prices and understand prevailing weather conditions. But through traditional extension services this information is slow to permeate. In Uganda there is just one extension officer for 46,000 farmers.

As of 2010 the mobile phone penetration rate in Africa was 68% - over 3.8 billion subscriptions. This figure continues to grow every year as network coverage expands and prices for data fall. In this context mobile telecoms offer a smart way to support rural agricultural development by providing information direct to farmers.

SIANI, the Swedish International Agricultural Network Initiative is organising a seminar to assess the future potential for mobile technology within the agricultural sector. **The following themes will be discussed:**

- Using the mobile phone as learning tool for rural farming communities
- Can the technical hardware cope with greater user demands?
- Scaling up: Providing locally relevant content to an expanding user base.
- How sustainable business models create sustainable development.

There are huge opportunities in this sector for improvements in agricultural productivity, livelihood resilience and future food security if the support is right. The event will be an opportunity to bring together African actors with the Swedish development and private sector.



## **Programme:**

### **09:00 – Welcome**

Madeleine Fogde, Programme Coordinator, SIANI

### **09:10 - Introduction**

Kerstin Jonsson Cisse, Lead Policy Specialist, Agriculture, Forestry & Food Security, Sida

This presentation will offer an overview of the current agricultural sector and its close links to climate, livelihoods and the environment. Agricultural development projects and policies could contribute to economic growth and strengthen equality and women's rights. ICT is a tool which can be used to help implement positive development both within and outside the agricultural sector.

### **09:30 - Case study: How locally run ICT services can support national development policies.**

Theresa Stanton, Zambia Country Manager, IICD

This presentation shares IICD's experiences of working with agricultural institutions and farmers associations in Zambia for the last 10 years. We will focus in particular on an SMS-messaging platform for farmers launched in 2011 and developed with our technical and financial support, by the National Agricultural Information Service (NAIS) of Zambia. NAIS is mandated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MACO) to disseminate agricultural information through a variety of media (radio, television, newsletters) to all players in the sector, especially the rural communities. We also show the important role that partnerships play in strengthening and ultimately up-scaling programmes and activities. For example, a Memorandum of Understanding between IICD and the Ministry for Youth and Sport in Zambia resulted in the deployment of capacity building and ICT equipment to 10 of Zambia's Youth Resource Centres. In addition, staff members of the Zambian Agricultural Research Institute (ZARI) built up their ICT capacities which enabled them to apply for and obtain a million-dollar research grant from an American foundation.

### **10:00 – Sida approach to sustainable business in developing countries**

Anne-Charlotte Malm, Senior Adviser B4D and Coordinator ICT4D

Private sector is growing in developing countries. More and more international companies are turning towards the developing world and the flow of private capital has increased during the past 10 years. Development cooperation agencies like Sida is seeking cooperation with the private sector to leverage the financial support from development assistance with private capital and to make business actors contribute to the goals of development cooperation. This presentation will describe the different instruments Sida uses for cooperation with the private sector and give some examples of ongoing projects. It will also describe how Sida supports capacity development within ICT4D.

### **10:30 – 11:00 Coffee Break**



### **11:00 – Making ICT work for Agriculture: Using the mobile phone as learning tool for rural farming communities in Uganda**

Daniel Ninsiima, Mobile Specialist, L3F Uganda

Traditional Agricultural Extension Services (AES) intended to serve smallholder farmers in Uganda and Sub-Saharan Africa at large have failed to make significant impacts (Jones, 2007), due partly to the lack of knowledge-sharing practices to disseminate timely agricultural information.. A key problem has been inadequate access to information due to weak linkages and interactions between agricultural research, extension and education, including, 1) the lack of knowledge and information articulating best practices and addressing interconnected socio-economic development issues such as agriculture, education, health, culture and the environment; and 2) a deficiency of relevant research information presented in easy to understand ways and localized to the needs and language of farmers. However, the growing ubiquity of mobile phones presents an excellent opportunity to put timely agriculture information into the hands of small holder farmers which will ultimately make them more productive and increase their income levels.

### **11:30 – Mobile Networks as an enabler for scalable development**

Karin Svingby, Director Projects & Partnerships, Ericsson

For developing regions keen to seize the opportunities of the Networked Society, ICT facilitates education, financial services, health, safety and security, and livelihoods, in support of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). With more than six billion mobile subscriptions, innovative approaches are still needed to address the needs of the “last” billion users at the base of the pyramid. Ericsson takes a holistic approach by combining technology, global presence and experience in public-private partnerships. By combining competency in developing new business models, with novel approaches we can replicate and scale successful initiatives for the greatest possible impact on the Millennium Development Goals.

### **12:00 – 30min Panel Discussion**

All speakers

## **Speaker Biographies**

### **Kerstin Jonsson Cisse**

Kerstin Jonsson Cisse is the lead Policy Specialist dept for International Organisations and Policy Support at Sida. She holds a PhD in Forestry from the Swedish University of Agriculture Sciences. Previous positions at Sida includes Country director for Team Burkina Faso and Mali (based in Stockholm), regional advisor on humanitarian affairs and post conflict reconstruction (based in Abidjan and Dakar) and as a research officer at SAREC (Sida’s Dep. for Research Cooperation). Prior to Sida, Kerstin worked at the SLU with research and in Burkina Faso for three years on agroforestry.



### **Theresa Stanton**

Theresa Stanton is Country Manager for Zambia at the International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) [www.iicd.org](http://www.iicd.org), an international non-profit NGO committed to connecting 15 million people in Africa and Latin America by the year 2015. She works closely with key stakeholders from education, health and agriculture, both in Zambia and internationally, to identify and develop ways in which information and communication technology (ICT) can be used to accelerate development in these sectors in Zambia. Before joining IICD in 2002, she was Head of Publications and Marketing/Editor-in-Chief of FID Review at the International Federation for Information and Documentation (FID) and Writer/Editor at the International Federation for Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) in the Netherlands. She has a BA (Hons) degree in South Asian Studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. [tstanton@iicd.org](mailto:tstanton@iicd.org)

### **Anne-Charlotte Malm**

Anne-Charlotte Malm has been working with development assistance during more than 20 years and is presently Coordinator for ICT4D and Senior Adviser for B4D at Sida HQ. Anne-Charlotte Malm holds a M.Sc. in Civil Engineering from Sweden's Royal Institute of Technology. Anne-Charlotte Malm's previous positions at Sida includes Assistant Director General Sida, Department Director for Infrastructure and Economic Cooperation, programme officer energy (based in Stockholm), regional programme officer for infrastructure (based in Hanoi), and Head of Division for Infrastructure (based in Stockholm). Prior to her employment at Sida, Anne-Charlotte Malm worked for ten years with the Swedish State Power Board, focusing on hydropower development, and for two years in Kenya with the World Bank's hand-pump program.

### **Daniel Ninsiima**

Bachelors of Information Technology- Mobile Applications Development

Research Assistant at Makerere University Agricultural Research Institute developing ICT applications and content for delivery of learning to small holder farmers in Western Uganda. Trains farmers on the use of ICT especially mobile phones to receive and develop their own agricultural related information for increased productivity.

Commonwealth of Learning (COL) Specialist on Open Distance Learning and Mobile Learning

Former Food Security Fellow with the US Department of State Food Security and ICT Fellowship Program at Oklahoma State University

Former ICT Fellow with the Japanese International Co-operation Agency (JICA) at Kobe Institute of Computing in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan

### **Karin Svingby**

Director Corporate Responsibility projects and partnerships, Ericsson Group Function Technology

Karin Svingby holds a Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Chalmers Technical University.

She has been working in the telecoms area for more than 15 years holding management positions ranging from sourcing, product and service development, portfolio management and sales.

Karin has for the last years worked with defining and leading multi-country and multi-partner projects within sustainability for Ericsson Group.

Before joining the Ericsson Group she worked as a management consultant for Recomate AB.