

Review of Mobile Phone Use for Market Information and Marketing Operations

We intend to review the use of mobile telephony in developing countries, focusing on the impact of two-way mobile communication on marketing operations and on the implementation of market information exchange services.

Our primary focus is on understanding the needs and constraints faced by end users of mobile technology in relation to market operations and the transfer of market information; and how they have been addressed through the use of mobile technology. Given the importance of the agricultural sector in many developing economies, the use of mobile telephony for agricultural marketing and for rural trade operations forms a clear focal point.

Secondly, we are interested in understanding the sustainable ways in which the uptake of mobile telephony can result in extended economic opportunities for socially more excluded groups, such as the poor, rural residents, small-holder farmers, women, etc.

We are interested in services that provide information that is usable by end users during any of the following stages: production decisions; price appraisal; marketing cost appraisal; transport search; outlet search; trading negotiation; trading payment; delivery monitoring; quality control etc.

Criteria

The main criteria for selecting the projects/schemes are:

- mobile devices facilitate market information exchange or market function execution;
- users are able both to access and to contribute (push/pull)¹ market information, or effect dialogued marketing functions;
- the market information accessed by, or delivered to the end users; as well as any executed marketing functions are national and/or local, rather than international;

The main points of analytical interest are:

- channels for access and creation of market information and information about marketing functions
- sustainability and business models used
- impact on socially excluded user groups as suppliers, or as consumers (e.g. poor/rural small-holders/women)
- impact on economic development and marketing operations;

The review will be carried out by studying secondary documents regarding approximately 30 initiatives (10 in Africa, 10 in Asia and the Pacific, 10 in Latin America and the Caribbean). Those will be selected without reference to their funding, the nature of the markets, or their area of operation.



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¹ The technological channels effecting two-way information transfer are not restricted to mobile technology. Cases of interest include systems where end users request or contribute data by means other than mobile (in person, via radio, telephone, electronic communication, etc.).