ICT Applications and Networking for Agro-chemicals and Fertilizers in Asia: Lessons from the FADINAP Experience

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Outline

1. Introduction
2. FADINAP, regional information network
3. Sustainability – a real challenge
4. ICT to the rescue
5. Virtual FADINAP ICT model
6. ICT-enabled partners
7. Successes
8. Challenges
9. Taking FADINAP model to Africa
10. Lessons learned

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FADINAP: regional information network

- Fertilizer Advisory, Development and Information Network for Asia and the Pacific (FADINAP)
- Established in 1978, 29 member countries
- Green revolution, high-yield crop varieties
- Focal point for regional information exchange

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Structure of FADINAP information network

TLO, NFIS (29 member countries)

Bibliographic Statistics National dev't Trade/marketing

Project Partners - FAO, UNIDO International/UN organizations Private sector NGOs

Statistics Regional dev't Trade/marketing

Mail, Fax Visits

FADINAP

Trade Bulletin Trade Fax

Agro-chemicals News-in-Brief

Country Profiles

Regional Bibliographic database

Statistical Database

Users

Commercial - Fertecon - Fertilizer Week

Trade Current news

Mail, Fax Visits

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Sustainability – a real challenge

• After 25 years of support, partners and donors started to bid goodbye

• Survival of the network was at risk
ICT to the rescue

Transform FADINAP into a virtual network

• Modernized its information services to become fully Internet-based

• Enable partners to use ICT to provide and access information
ICT-enabled partners

• Orientation session
• Intensive web development training
• Building national web sites
• Link with FADINAP web site
FADINAP web site became popular!
Successes

Key to success!

1. **Interactive and dynamic contents**
   - Fertilizer directory
   - Buy and sale bulletin board
   - Fertilizer prices
   - Database on pesticides and the environment

2. **Visibility**
   - Top link in major search engines

3. **Links**
   - Major portal for fertilizer and agro-chemicals worldwide

4. **Partners**
   - Links to national data and sites
Need to improve e-government services

- 11,764 government web sites in China
- Only 5.2 per cent are frequently visited
- Nearly half are simply one-way mirror
- Only 14 per cent with English language

More interaction is badly needed!
Visibility

FADINAP top on the list using Yahoo search

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Challenges

Key challenges

1. **Partners slow to adopt modern ICT**
   - Low priority
   - Lack of appreciation

2. **FADINAP’s inability to secure funds for web maintenance**
FADINAP goes Africa

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Lessons learned

- ICT proved to be a very effective in setting up a virtual information network
- ICT reduces significantly the cost of running the service.
- Interactive and dynamic contents are the key to success of web-based services
- Regular updating of content is important
- There is a high-demand for market information (prices, directory)
Lessons learned

- Active participation of partners is very important
- Partners appreciate the need for ICT but did not allocate sufficient resources
- Continuing training and education is crucial to keep up with the rapid development of the technology
- Main beneficiaries - developed countries, private sector and progressive companies and individuals