Helping people access the information they need

RIU

Validated RNRRS Output.

In Kenya, a new method has been developed to identify what information communities need and to get it to them effectively. The method involves working closely with communities and conducting needs assessments in order to help local people identify and express what information they need. This is then sourced and provided to the communities in easy-to-understand ways through local organisations like churches, schools and women's groups. These unusual pathways are very effective at delivering a wide range of information. For example, children can be taught about a subject in school using books with lots of pictures. They can then be encouraged to go home and show their often-illiterate parents the books, explaining what they've learned and passing on the information.

Project Ref: **LPP28 :**
Topic: **7. Spreading the Word: Knowledge Management & Dissemination**
Lead Organisation: **Need-to-Know Ltd, UK**
Source: **Livestock Production Programme**

Document Contents:

Description

Research into Use
NR International
Park House
Bradbourne Lane
Aylesford
Kent
ME20 6SN
UK

Geographical regions included:

Kenya,

Target Audiences for this content:

Livestock farmers,

LPP28

A. Description of the research output(s)

1. Working title of output or cluster of outputs.
In addition, you are free to suggest a shorter more imaginative working title/acronym of 20 words or less.

Methodologies for development of appropriate extension messages and communication pathways

Appropriate Communication

2. Name of relevant RNRRS Programme(s) commissioning supporting research and also indicate other funding sources, if applicable.

LPP

3. Provide relevant R numbers (and/or programme development/dissemination reference numbers covering supporting research) along with the institutional partners (with individual contact persons (if appropriate)) involved in the project activities. As with the question above, this is primarily to allow for the legacy of the RNRRS to be acknowledged during the RIUP activities.

R7425

Need to Know Ltd, UK.
The Mediae Trust, UK/Nairobi.
Development Communications, Nairobi.
Agriculture Information Centre, Kenya.
CfBT Education Services, Nairobi.
University of Reading.

Additional technical inputs were provided by:

The University of Glasgow, Scotland.
Sokoine Agricultural University, Tanzania.
Livestock Production Research Institute, Mpwapwa, Tanzania.
Kenya Agriculture Research Institute,
ILRI, Nairobi.
Northumbria Health Care Trust, England.
International League for the Protection of Horses, England.
Bees for Development, England.
Henry Doubleday Research Association, England.

*4. Describe the RNRRS output or cluster of outputs being proposed and when was it produced? **(max. 400 words)**. This requires a clear and concise description of the output(s) and the problem the output(s) aimed to address.*

Please incorporate and highlight (in bold) key words that would/could be used to select your output when held in a database.

Project R7425 was a short pilot-project to develop a **methodology** which would identify the **information needs** of poor rural households, **source** the **appropriate technical information** and **deliver** this to the households, in ways which took account of the needs and circumstances of the recipients, using **trusted channels**.

A secondary output was **direct information provision** to households in the study area, resulting in **improved knowledge** and **access** to information in the community.

The project used a **needs assessment** process and **two-way communication** with the **target communities** to enable **participation** in the identification of **topics** for inclusion. **Technical information** was developed by working closely with **academic specialists** and experienced **field workers**.

Using **innovative delivery pathways** including **schools**, **churches** and **women's groups,** the project materials reached an estimated 7,300 households. The **Wambui finds out…** series of ten booklets were recognised by 85% of households in post-project sampling and achieved measurable **change in knowledge** and **attitude** in response to questions on information content.

5. What is the type of output(s) being described here?
Please tick one or more of the following options.

Product	***Technology***	***Service***	***Process or Methodology***	***Policy***	***Other Please specify***
X	**?**	**?**	**X**		

Note: The main Outputs described are a process/methodology for appropriate communication of technical information and the Wambui finds out… series of booklets as a product. However, the implementation of the process could be offered as a service to receiving Governments, agencies and NGOs.

6. What is the main commodity (ies) upon which the output(s) focussed? Could this output be applied to other commodities, if so, please comment

The Outputs in the original project were primarily focussed on livestock production and animal health. However the process crossed sectoral boundaries into the fields of health and education.

The methodology is applicable to all commodities and sectors and is particularly appropriate for cross-linking programmes. Since the information-needs identified by the community may not be those identified by agents wishing to "push" particular technologies, any delivery programme has to be able to cross sectoral boundaries and deliver the information that households need.

7. What production system(s) does/could the output(s) focus upon?
Please tick one or more of the following options. Leave blank if not applicable

Semi-Arid	High potential	Hillsides	Forest-Agriculture	Peri-urban	Land water	Tropical moist forest	Cross-cutting
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

8. What farming system(s) does the output(s) focus upon?
Please tick one or more of the following options (see Annex B for definitions).
Leave blank if not applicable

Smallholder rainfed humid	Irrigated	Wetland rice based	Smallholder rainfed highland	Smallholder rainfed dry/cold	Dualistic	Coastal artisanal fishing
			X	X		

*9. How could value be added to the output or additional constraints faced by poor people addressed by clustering this output with research outputs from other sources (RNRRS and non RNRRS)? (**max. 300 words**).*

Please specify what other outputs your output(s) could be clustered. At this point you should make reference to the circulated list of RNRRS outputs for which proformas are currently being prepared.

Unlike many providers of technical information, people and communities do not compartmentalise information into “crops”, “livestock”, “health” etc. The methodology described in the Output is applicable across the full range of information needs. Indeed, by making stronger linkages between sectors (for example human health and animal health) information delivery becomes more real for people and achieves a synergy that single-issue information campaigns cannot achieve. This concept was tested in the booklet “Clean Hands, Clean Milk” which combined information on human hygiene with information on disease prevention in dairy cattle, using both medical and veterinary specialists to provide technical content.

Additional side-issue information can be introduced alongside demand-led technical information so that, for example, issues relating to social development, migration or governance can be explored. Again, by placing technical information in a context which relates to the target audience’s own experience, the technical content achieves a greater degree of trust and acceptance.

It is not appropriate to define the technical content of information required by any target community in advance of the needs assessment phase of the methodology, however the approach is particularly suited to assisting in delivery of DFID strategic goals in sustainable agriculture, climate change and water management and could be clustered with DFID’s preferred research and policy Outputs in these areas.

Validation

B. Validation of the research output(s)

*10**. How** were the output(s) validated and **who** validated them?*

*Please provide brief description of method(s) used and consider application, replication, adaptation and/or adoption in the context of any partner organisation and user groups involved. In addressing the "who" component detail which group(s) did the validation e.g. end users, intermediary organisation, government department, aid organisation, private company etc... This section should also be used to detail, if applicable, to which social group, gender, income category the validation was applied and any increases in productivity observed during validation **(max. 500 words)**.*

Validation of the methodology was central to the pilot project, with repeated transect studies performed which gave quantitative data on the reach and uptake of the information. Further information on attitudes to the communication process was collected as part of these studies.

External validation in the period after project completion was not conducted.

However, in more recent work by Mediae and PSI in Kenya (see below), a comic book containing malaria prevention information was validated (ie: proven to be effective) by:

School children and their teachers who were asked to conduct two surveys amongst their community members, first when the booklets arrived and the second, three months later. There was a high teacher/student involvement in this project. Many schools went well beyond the recommended participation and validation exercise. Eg: one school encouraged students to read the comic book to more than 50 adults in the community. Another school staged a drama based on the booklet and invited all parents/ adults to come and see it. Another school started a malaria prevention club and lectured other classes in the importance of preventing malaria amongst pregnant women and children under the age of five.

Results of the pre and post distribution show

- 27% of families had a net in first survey; increased to 65% of families at time of second survey.
- 18% of pregnant women used a net at time of first survey, increasing to 47% at time of second survey.
- 25% of children slept under a net at the time of the first survey, increasing to 55% of children at time of the second survey.

*11. **Where and when** have the output(s) been validated?*

*Please indicate the places(s) and country(ies), any particular social group targeted and also indicate in which production system and farming system, using the options provided in questions 7 and 8 respectively, above **(max 300 words)**.*

The pilot-project validation was conducted in the Embu District of Kenya amongst settled smallholder farmers in 2001. The farms were along a series of transects which crossed agroclimatic zones from high potential to semi-arid and included households across the social spectrum, with 80% of household in the lower wealth ranks.

Current Situation

C. Current situation

*12. **How and by whom** are the outputs currently being used? Please give a brief description **(max. 250 words**).*

Mediae and **Population Services International** (PSI) are using this methodology in a Malaria Prevention and Control project in Kenya

The purpose of the PSI comic book design and distribution project was to communicate the importance of using nets by pregnant women, infants and children under 5 years in very rural areas that are characterised by widespread illiteracy and poor access to health information.

Booklets (and posters) were distributed to 2,021 primary schools (85,600 primary, Standard 7 school children) in five high malaria districts (Bondo, Gucha, Kisii, Wale and Makuene). All schools were at least 10 kms from a main road. Children were encouraged to take materials home and show/read them to as many adults as possible in their communities.

*13. **Where** are the outputs currently being used? As with Question 11 please indicate place(s) and countries where the outputs are being used **(max. 250 words).***

Kenya, Districts of Bondo, Gucha, Kisii, Kwale and Makweni.

*14. What is the scale of current use? Indicating how quickly use was established and whether usage is still spreading **(max 250 words).***

In the current Mediae and PSI work, booklets have been distributed to 2,021 primary schools, with a total of 86,635 Standard 7 students. A total of 88,266 booklets were circulated to these schools, using the District Education Office in each district for distribution. The average number of adults each booklet was shown or read to is as follows: (these are 2005 findings)

District	Av. Number of Adults book shown to
Bondo	69
Gucha	74
Kisii	70
Kwale	72
Makweni	84
Total Average	**74**

Standard 7 pupils in these schools are encouraged to read/show/interpret the content of the comic book (which contains detailed information on malaria prevention) to often illiterate adults, with the aim of encouraging behaviour change in the home, especially with vulnerable groups.

15. In your experience what programmes, platforms, policy, institutional structures exist that have assisted with the

promotion and/or adoption of the output(s) proposed here and in terms of capacity strengthening what do you see as the key facts of success? ***(max 350 words).***

A key principle of the methodology described in this Output is to make full use, in innovative ways, of existing institutional structures (including informal ones). The programmes, platforms, policies and institutional structures that are useful in one location may not necessarily be useful in another. Institutional mapping is an important part of the needs assessment process and helps to identify appropriate delivery pathways.

Key Facts of Success:

§ A picture tells a thousand words.
§ Children like to have something new to show their parents.
§ People respond well to information that is tailored to their needs
§ People love to have useful information to give out. This motivates teachers, church leaders and staff in formal advisory services.
§ Scientists like to see practical use of their knowledge. They sometimes find it difficult to identify pragmatic solutions but appreciate help in appropriate presentation and application of their knowledge.

Current Promotion

D. Current promotion/uptake pathways

16. ***Where*** *is promotion currently taking place? Please indicate for each country specified detail what promotion is taking place, by whom and indicate the scale of current promotion* ***(max 200 words).***

Kenya: Mediae and PSI worked in five districts around the country (see above) in 2005 (for which survey findings have been elicited). This distribution has now expanded to include another 12 districts across Kenya (Murang'a, Maragua, Kirinyaga, Kajiado, Machakos, Kitui, Mwingi, Nandi North, Nandi South, Baringo, Marakwet and West Pokot).

Currently there are 221,700 booklets that have been distributed to a total of 221,595 Standard 7 primary children in 5,003 schools.

17. What are the current barriers preventing or slowing the adoption of the output(s)? Cover here institutional issues, those relating to policy, marketing, infrastructure, social exclusion etc. ***(max 200 words)****.*

Adequate finance so that information can be better tailored to disadvantaged groups and delivered through the most appropriate channels. While innovative use of mass-market information channels can achieve significant "reach", there is a tendency for excluded groups to have less engagement with these processes and for information to become more generic and less targeted at local needs.

Institutional support is required at all levels, through an explicit and structured strategy for delivery of technical information and an acceptance by staff at all levels that information provision is worthwhile.

Policy makers and **local politicians** need to be supportive of information provision, even if this may lead to raised expectations of good governance.

Scientists and **technical advisors** need to see the value of communicating basic information to people, even where this may not appear to support the direction of their scientific research or their commercial interests.

Literacy, language and **social exclusion** are also barriers to information provision, however, an appropriate communications strategy, by definition, must be designed to work around such barriers, using the existing knowledge and information systems that excluded groups already use.

18. What changes are needed to remove/reduce these barriers to adoption? This section could be used to identify perceived capacity related issues ***(max 200 words).***

The Methodology described in the Output is designed to recognise the barriers to adoption and internalise these by developing appropriate communication pathways. In this way the Output works with the strengths in the livelihoods framework rather than focusing on constraint removal.

19. What lessons have you learnt about the best ways to get the outputs used by the largest number of poor people? ***(max 300 words).***

Learning how to get technical outputs used by the largest number of poor people was the main focus of the project.

- information needs (as defined by people themselves) are often very different from the technology push from agencies and advisors
- very little basic information is available to poor farmers
- existing knowledge has an effect on the rate of uptake of new information
- preconceived information can be a real barrier to achieving change in practices.
- change in knowledge does not necessarily lead to a change in practice.
- where people have little existing knowledge or are uncertain as to best practice, they are much more receptive to information.
- using trusted intermediaries has a big impact on uptake.
- hierarchical delivery agents can help overcome logistics problems.
- local groups can be effective at delivery but difficult to find.
- children can be effective conduits for information into households.
- using multiple distribution routes adds to information reach and cross-verification.
- Cross-sectoral information provision aids understanding and trust.

Impacts On Poverty

E. Impacts on poverty to date

20. Where have impact studies on poverty in relation to this output or cluster of outputs taken place? This should include any formal poverty impact studies (and it is appreciated that these will not be commonplace) and any less formal studies including any poverty mapping-type or monitoring work which allow for some analysis on impact on poverty to be made. Details of any cost-benefit analyses may also be detailed at this point. Please list studies here.

Wealth-ranking was carried out as part of the project's information needs assessment. Trained staff used visual cues to allocate households to one of four wealth levels. 80% of the households in the study area were found to be in the lowest two quartiles.

The needs assessment results indicated a strong demand for information on livestock associated with the lower end of the poverty scale – bees, rabbits and poultry.

A simple benefit/cost analysis for provision of information on treatment of adult cattle for worms was carried out. The difference in cost between the pre-release practice and the recommended practice was 1,000 Kenya Shillings (KSh) a year and the cost of each booklet was 20 Ksh, giving a break-even point for benefit at an uptake level of only 2%. The actual level of uptake for this particular issue was at the lowest end of the range for knowledge-change shown in the study, however at 6% this was still comfortably above break-even point for benefit over cost. (For comparison, the highest change in knowledge on any topic in the study was 50%).

21. Based on the evidence in the studies listed above, for each country detail how the poor have benefited from the application and/or adoption of the output(s) ***(max. 500 words):***

- *What positive impacts on livelihoods have been recorded and over what time period have these impacts been observed? These impacts should be recorded against the capital assets (human, social, natural, physical and, financial) of the livelihoods framework;*
- *For whom i.e. which type of person (gender, poverty group (see glossary for definitions) has there been a positive impact;*
- *Indicate the number of people who have realised a positive impact on their livelihood;*
- *Using whatever appropriate indicator was used detail what was the average percentage increase recorded*

As mentioned above, the project has no objectively verified evidence of impacts on the livelihoods of people in the target area. This was an 18-month pilot-project and the required follow-up studies were never commissioned.

In a complex information environment, it is impossible to isolate project-related benefits from other influences. The project achieved measurable changes in knowledge and, for certain topics, this knowledge can be shown to have led to changes in attitude. However, changes in attitude do not necessarily lead to changes in practices and changes in practices do not always lead to improvements in livelihoods.

The project reached 7,300 households in a target area where 80% of the households were in the lowest half of the wealth scale. Changes in household knowledge varied between 6% and 50% depending on the topic.

Environmental Impact

H. Environmental impact

24. What are the direct and indirect environmental benefits related to the output(s) and their outcome(s)? ***(max 300 words)***

This could include direct benefits from the application of the technology or policy action with local governments or multinational agencies to create environmentally sound policies or programmes. Any supporting and appropriate evidence can be provided in the form of an annex.

As indicated above, the Output can contribute to farmers implementing good environmental practice.

An unintended but useful side benefit is often seen with appropriate materials, since these materials are often popular with policy makers and senior officials, who also "learn" from them. In a reversal of the normal environmental mantra, by helping policy makers to think locally, they are better able to act globally.

25. Are there any adverse environmental impacts related to the output(s) and their outcome(s)? ***(max 100 words)***

No.

26. Do the outputs increase the capacity of poor people to cope with the effects of climate change, reduce the risks of natural disasters and increase their resilience? ***(max 200 words)***

This is a particular strength of the Output. To cope with climate change, people need information that may not be readily available in their existing knowledge system. They need to learn new strategies to minimise or avoid risks, they need to adopt new coping mechanisms. The better informed people are, the more resilient they become.