CONVENING TO SHARE EXPERIENCES ON VIDEO-BASED ICT FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

-THE DIGITAL GREEN APPROACH IN ETHIOPIA –

Venue: Infocenter Breakout Room, ILRI Campus, Addis Ababa
Date: February 7, 2014

1. Introduction

Digital Green leverages information and communication technology to amplify the effectiveness of development efforts. It builds upon existing systems and institutions as well as inherent capabilities of communities to create and share knowledge in an effective and efficient manner.

Digital Green empowers local communities to produce participatory videos on locally relevant practices featuring local farmers, and share to other members using handheld battery operated pico projectors. While videos stimulate excitement and serve as a focal point for dialogue, it is the engagement and empowerment of people and social dynamics which makes the approach a success. Enthusiasm for new technology and innovation in general, and the thrill of appearing on video or seeing fellow community members on video, motivates individuals to participate. The power of positive identification with peers is leveraged to minimize the distance between teacher and learner, and to maximize the uptake of practices or behaviours being exchanged. In a controlled evaluation, the Digital Green approach was found to increase the uptake of agricultural practices seven-fold and to improve the cost-effectiveness of a conventional extension system by a factor of ten per dollar spent.

Incubated in Microsoft Research India in 2006 as a research project, Digital Green spun off into a non-profit in 2008. In India, Digital Green has partnered with the National Rural Livelihood Mission of the Government of India and several other organizations to extend its approach to over 2,400 villages. Till date, over 2,900 videos in 20 different languages have been produced on topics ranging from institution building to sustainable agriculture to animal husbandry. All of the videos are publically available on a web-based library (digitalgreen.org/discover/) along with analytics data (analytics.digitalgreen.org/) and a geo-located view into the histories of the groups and individual community members involved in this process via a platform called Farmerbook (farmerbook.digitalgreen.org). Digital Green has also developed Connect Online Connect Offline (COCO), an open-source technology tool to manage data in locations with poor connectivity.

Digital Green has also been conducting pilots in African countries such as Ethiopia, Ghana and Tanzania in agriculture and nutrition related areas. In Ethiopia, Digital Green has partnered with Ministry of Agriculture and organizations such as AGRA, Oxfam America, Sasakawa Africa Association, IDE and PATH to strengthen extension services using its community centric participatory videos. The initial response from the community has been remarkable and we are now poised to expand our work in Ethiopia at the national level in partnership with Ministry of Agriculture and Agriculture Transformation Agency.

2. Objectives of the Workshop

This one-day workshop aims to enhance the learning on the use of video based ICT extension approach in Ethiopia in order to scale its usage nationally.

1. To share experiences and lessons in using the Digital Green approach in Ethiopia

2. To learn from community based approaches and how these can catalyse empowerment and rural development.

3. To explore opportunities in linking agriculture / nutrition and health through the video-based approach

4. To assess the potential and challenges of the Digital Green approach and discuss promising ways to roll it out collaboratively

5. To develop the commitment of the Ethiopian government and donors to scale Digital Green approach in Ethiopia nationally

3. Anticipated Overview Programme

	Friday February 7, 2014
8:30 *Session 1* **10:30**	**OPENING & 'SETTING THE SCENE':** **Welcome and Introduction** **Address by State Minister of Agriculture and senior officials of Ministry of Agriculture, Agriculture Transformation Agency, DFID, BMGF** **a) Presentation on the context of Ethiopian extension** **b) Presentation on the Digital Green journey so far**
	COFFEE
11:00 *Session 2* **13:00**	**Analysis of experiences and lessons (Group work)** **Sharing of experiences**
	LUNCH
14:00 *Session 3* **15:30**	**Exploring the potential of using community-based platforms for rural development in Ethiopia**
	COFFEE
16:00 *Session 4* **17:30**	**Promising ways to move forward** **Commitments from the different partners** **Outlook and next steps** **Closing**

4. Workshop Format and Facilitation

4.1. The facilitator

The workshop will be facilitated by Dr. Jürgen Hagmann - professional facilitator from the Institute for People, Innovation and Change in Organisations (PICOTEAM) in South Africa.

4.2. The interaction process

The process will build fully on the open, lively interaction and debate among participants in a least formal way in order to create the most fruitful learning atmosphere. Therefore maximum time is given to discussions in plenary and working groups to thresh out issues in depth and to advance conceptual thinking and share practical know-how.

The workshop depends fully on the commitment of the participants with their experience and knowledge. As long presentation sessions would defeat the purpose of the workshop to develop joint strategies in interaction among the participants, we will keep presentations at an absolute minimum and enhance interaction after each presentation through small buzzing groups in order to increase the opportunities for everyone to contribute effectively.

5. Expectations from Participants

We would like to encourage participants to bring along interesting materials, reports, brochures and posters which can be shared through an 'information market'. Posters can be put up throughout the workshop room. In addition, there will be a table to display interesting materials and publications.