



e-Infrastructure for Agriculture

Nodumo Dhlamini, Program Manager
RUFORUM www.ruforum.org

Outline

- About RUFORUM
- The Agricultural Value Chain & e-infrastructure
- Drivers for Success
- African Initiatives towards e-infrastructure development: RUFORUM, Applab
- Conclusion

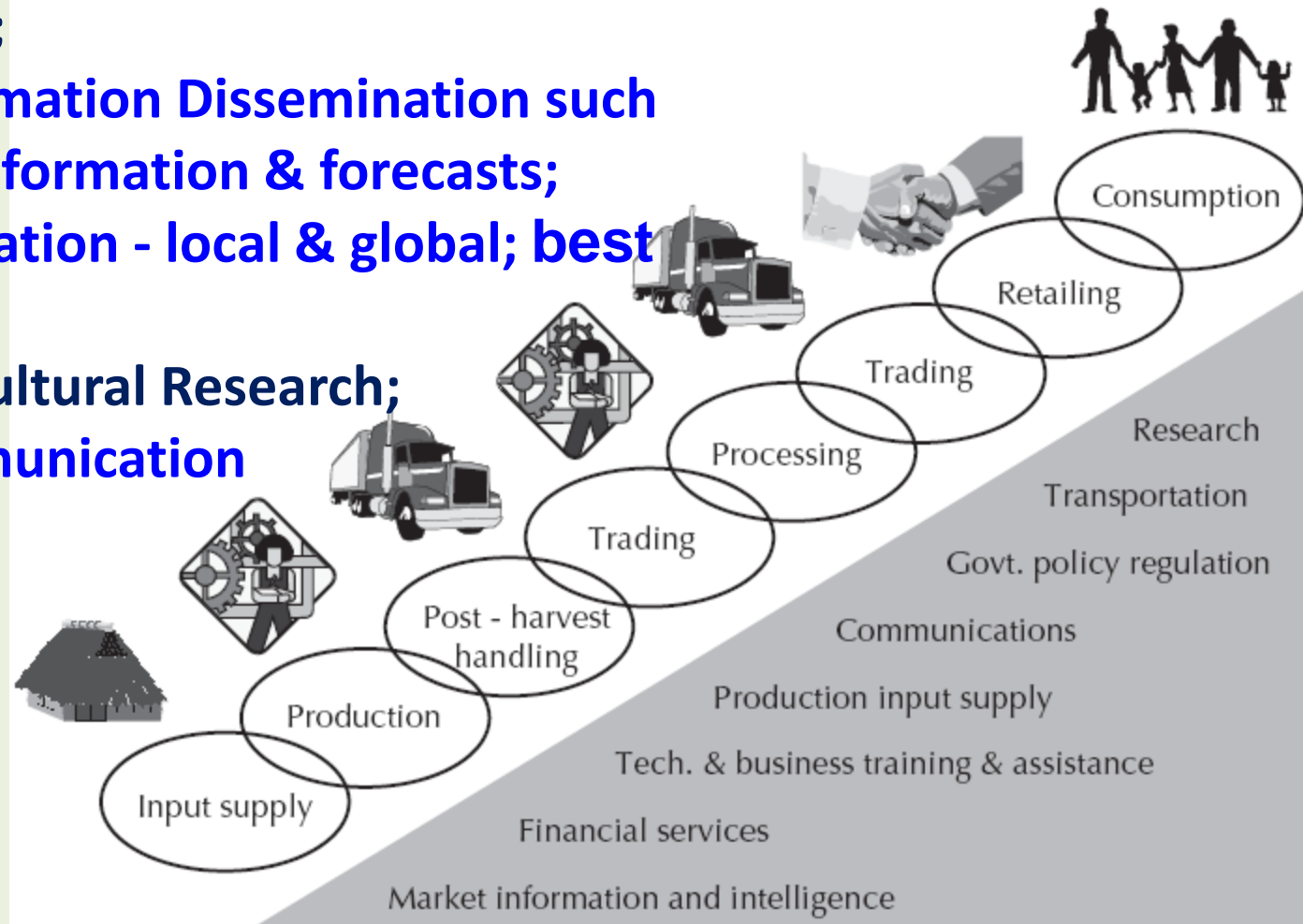
About RUFORUM

- Regional Network of 25 African universities in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa (www.ruforum.org) linking through Faculties of Agriculture
- We focus is on ***building the capacity of Agricultural Faculties to enable them produce relevant graduates*** trained to solve Africa's developmental challenges

e-Infrastructure enhancing the Agricultural Value Chain

e-Infrastructure will add value to:

1. Support Capacity development (rural, and academic);
2. Facilitate Information Dissemination such as: Weather information & forecasts; Market Information - local & global; best practices
3. Promote Agricultural Research;
4. Enhance Communication



Drivers of Success

- Enabling Policy environment
- Human capacity,
- Entrepreneurial incentives
- Appropriate content,
- Robust related Infrastructure (power, connectivity)
- Access to relevant ICTs (mobile phones, computers, radios, etc)

African Initiatives towards e-infrastructure development

EXAMPLES

- **RUFORUM** – Building the human infrastructural capacity for ICT Competent Agricultural Professional (MSc AICM); Supporting E-Content Development & Delivery for Regional Postgraduate Programs
- **AppLab Uganda (MTN, Google and Grameen Foundation)** - *Transforming Lives Through Innovation in Information Access in Uganda*

AppLab Uganda – Transforming Lives Through Innovation in Information Access: Grameen Foundation Concept



The AppLab connects the poor in Uganda to critical information services through Village Phones:

AppLab

Transforming Lives through Innovation in Information Access



- **Other Partners** - Marie Stopes, Straight Talk and Busoga Rural Open Source Development Initiative
- MTN has **>100,000 Village Phones** & Other Shared Phone Operators
- **Applications** to share information related to weather, agricultural tips & advice , the agricultural market place and health issues
- Since 2007 Google, MTN & Garmen Foundation have built the **physical, human and technological infrastructure**. AppLab Initiative launched in June 2009

Conclusions

- Agriculture is Africa's greatest industry and is recognized as the essential engine for economic development.
- E-Infrastructure investments will benefit all the players across the Agricultural Value Chain
- Capacity Development is key to driving the successful use of the emerging e-infrastructures
- ICT and agriculture experts need to work together to map out the needs for the agricultural sector.

Bibliography

- Using Value Chain Approaches in Agribusiness & Agriculture in Sub Saharan Africa: Prepared for the World Bank - J.E. Austin Associates, Inc.; Martin Webber, Patrick Labaste, The World Bank <http://vle.worldbank.org/bnpp/files/TF054197VCGuideJuly28FinalDraft.pdf>
- The Role of ICT in the Agricultural Value Chain: <http://www.e-agriculture.org/ict-agricultural-value-chains>
- <http://www.beliefproject.org/about-e-infrastructures/what-are-e-infrastructures>