ICT for sustainable development: case study from Cambodia

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FOCUS OF PAPER

Framework integrating:

- First Mile
- Capability Approach (CA)
- Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D)
- Information and Communication Technologies for Sustainability (ICT4S)

PROPOSITIONS

- As a First Mile initiative, telecentres can play a practical role for sustainability, incl climate change adaptation and mitigation

- There is no dichotomy between telecentres and mobiles – both are valuable and can complement each other

- The capability approach is a useful framework for the design and evaluation of ICT initiatives for the promotion of sustainability with a human development perspective

CASE STUDY – iREACH, CAMBODIA

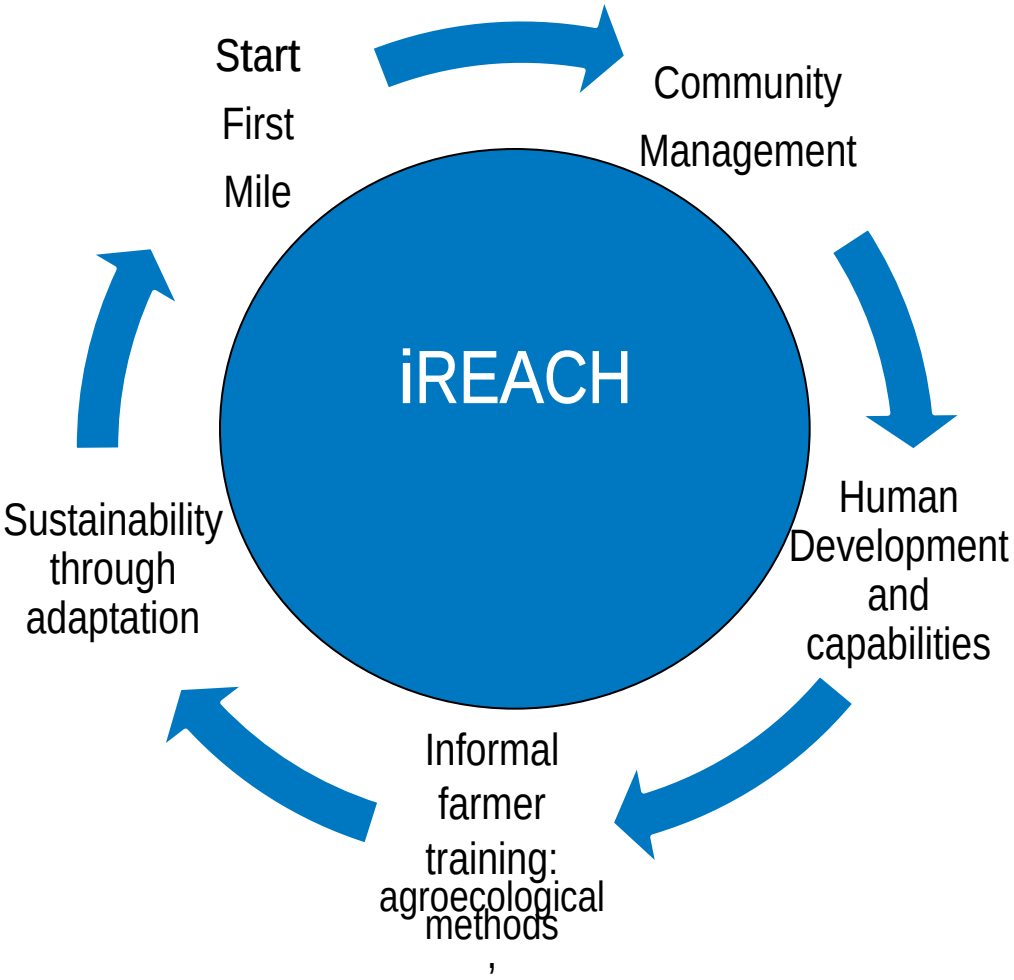
- Community managed First Mile initiative funded by Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC)
- Initially to provide access to previously unserved areas
- Also focus on human development and sustainability
- Two sites: hubs in ten villages at each site
- Consolidated to one hub at one site
- Evolved to use of ICTs for informal training of farmers to improve their resilience to climate change
  - DVD developed under another IDRC project
  - Mobiles

iREACH HEADQUARTERS IN KEP

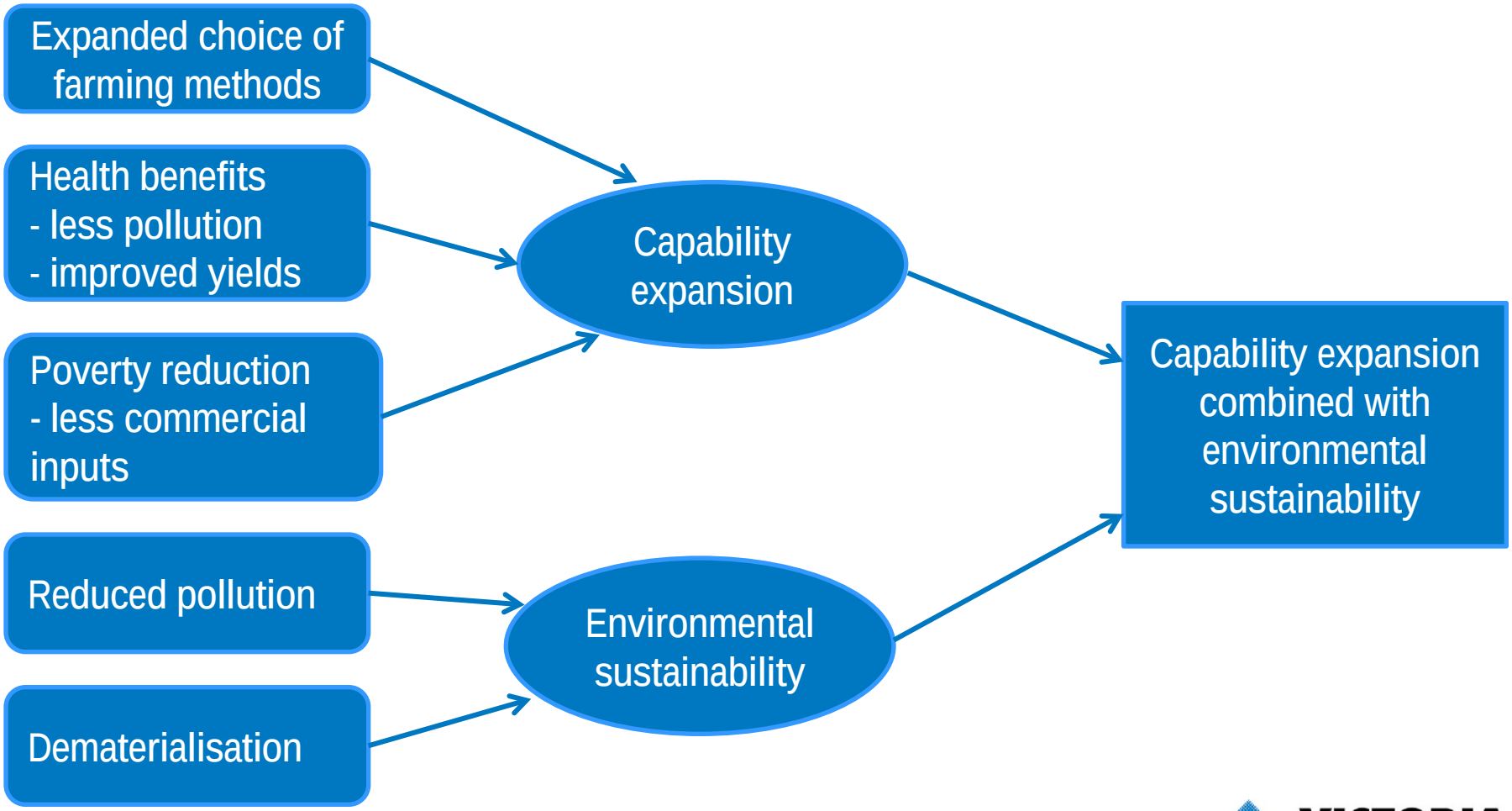
iREACH HUB UNDER A HOUSE

STUDENT VOLUNTEERS FOR iREACH FARMER TRAINING PROJECT

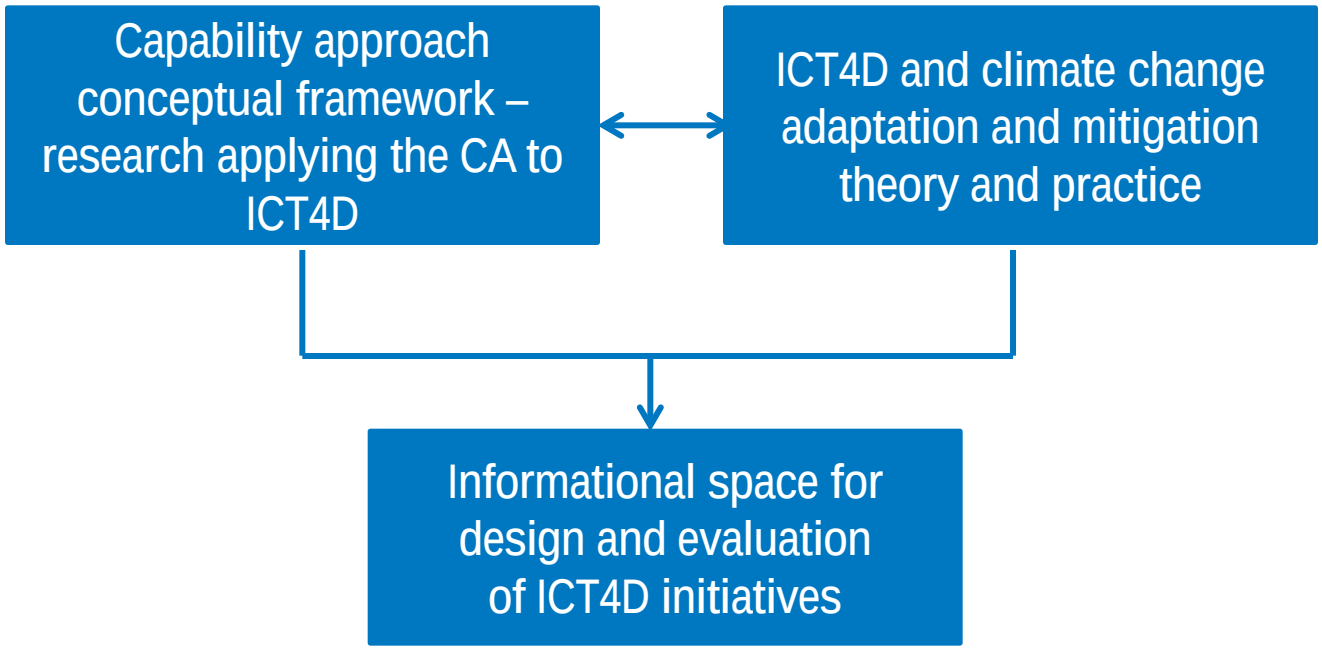
iREACH TRAJECTORY



CONTRIBUTIONS OF AGRICULTURE TRAINING TO CAPABILITIES AND SUSTAINABILITY



INFORMATIONAL SPACE FOR DESIGN AND EVALUATION OF ICT4D INITIATIVES



REFLECTIONS

- Limitations
  - Unrepresentative study
  - Role of Chea Sim University of Kamchaymear
- Lessons
  - Potential of public access facilities to contribute to capabilities and sustainability
  - Requires specific focus
- Future research
  - Have other centres achieved combined environmental and social objectives, in addition to their role as a First Mile option?
  - How can centres encourage continuous learning and link small-hold farmers in different locations and with institutions, such as CSUK?
  - More rigorous studies required
- Policy implications if potential is validated
  - Public access centres in combination with mobiles could contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Fifth Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on climate change released earlier this week. Key findings relevant to this paper:

- Climate change is already affecting food supply and
- The poor will suffer most from climate change

Requires urgency and high priority to build resilience to climate change.

Hope the paper will stimulate debate, further research and action within community informatics, so it can be an even stronger force in building resilience.