**Knowledge Transformation for livelihood security among fishing and farming community**

**Summary/Objective of the project -  In 4000 characters -  about 500 words**

M S Swaminathan Research Foundation has been working in the field of ICT4D since 1992 with the focus to reduce the digital, knowledge and gender divide between rural and urban India. The prolonged and pragmatic experience of MSSRF on ICT4D facilitating transformation among small craft and small holding resource poor community through the action platform of Village Resource Centre and Village Knowledge Centre carved a pathway in January 2011 for evolving holistic and standalone models for mitigating risks and maximizing economic benefit. Such model works in 6 states of India, proving its catalytic capacity of bringing transformation in their lives and livelihoods harnessing the power of technology small/marginalized resource poor fishers/farmers who are in the most disadvantageous and vulnerable position. Together 16 VRCs, 67 VKCs and 9 cluster of virtual VKCs are reaching to more than 1.3 lakh rural community.

As a holistic model, the entire spectrum of VRC-VKC acts as an action platform for real time information and knowledge dissemination, e-governance services, stimulate knowledge dialogue between scientists and farmers / fishers, early warning, participatory science communication of land-land, land-lab, lab-land and land to land using a gamut of best fit technologies. It serves unique as each of the tool used can function as a distinct model to reduce risk and enhance economic well being of the farming and fishing community.

The models thrive to provide shore to shore approach and end to end solution to the fishing and farming community to address their day to day livelihood related challenges and critical information requirements. Multipronged technology solution offers a gamut of holistic knowledge services through Physical VKCs, mobile based text and audio SMS services, Android based Fisher Friend Mobile Application, 24/7 multilingual helplines, phone in programmes, audio / video conferences, GSM based public address systems and community news papers.

Combination of critical knowledge services to the fishing community such as landing centre wise location specific ocean state forecast, potential fishing zone, potential fishing zone both general and species specific, market price, International Border line alert, government schemes, disaster alerts, conservation and sustainable fisheries, new fishing technologies, fish quality management techniques, news flash and emergency contacts ensures risk reduction and economic enhancement. It helped in safeguarding 92 lives from peril situation on sea and helped them have assured catch while mitigating the asset loss.

Similarly, the knowledge services rendered to farming community focusing early warning, weather forecast, market rate, soil health and water management, pest and disease management, latest technology, sustainable farming practices, government schemes etc brought about changes in their livelihoods. Most of the farmers benefitted realized that timely information enabled them to mitigate pest incidents and increased their yield and economic returns.

The model has inbuilt sustainable mechanism collaborating with public, private and community stakeholders and such exhibits its uniqueness to draw the attention of policy holders, philanthropists and corporate for replication. The recent innovation of Fisher Friend Mobile Application fetched the attentition of many stakeholders including the mBillionth South Asian Award 2014.

**2) Beneficiary of the project  in 2000 characters -  250 words**

The total beneficiaries reached through the 16 VRCs, 67 VKCs and 9 virtual sites in 1154 villages across 6 states are 135569 (92126 men and 43443 women). The total life saved due to helpline falls 93.

* 578 farming villages in 31 districts of 4 states accessed information and knowledge services related to agriculture
* 3901 users of 276 villages from 24 districts received audio advisories in Tamil and Marathi.
* 1658 users from 359 villages in 17 districts across Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, and Maharashtra have accessed the helpline.
* About 2350 fisher folk used the helpline to get the status of cyclone movement and benefited during payalin and Thane cyclone.
* 12032 users from 592 villages (137 new villages) of 29 districts received audio advisories in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, and Odiya, on PFZ, OSF, disaster alerts, market data, government schemes, emergency contact numbers, and international border alerts.
* 512 fishers (on rotation basis) used FFMA and received critical information and 4000 fishers obtained knowledge about the FFMA through awareness meetings
* 15688 users from 467 villages in 29 districts across Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, and Andhra Pradesh, Kerala  accessed the helpline.
* 108 phone-in programmes benefitted 2100 fisher men and 673 fisher women who interacted directly with experts and sought advice on several topics.

Team Members

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