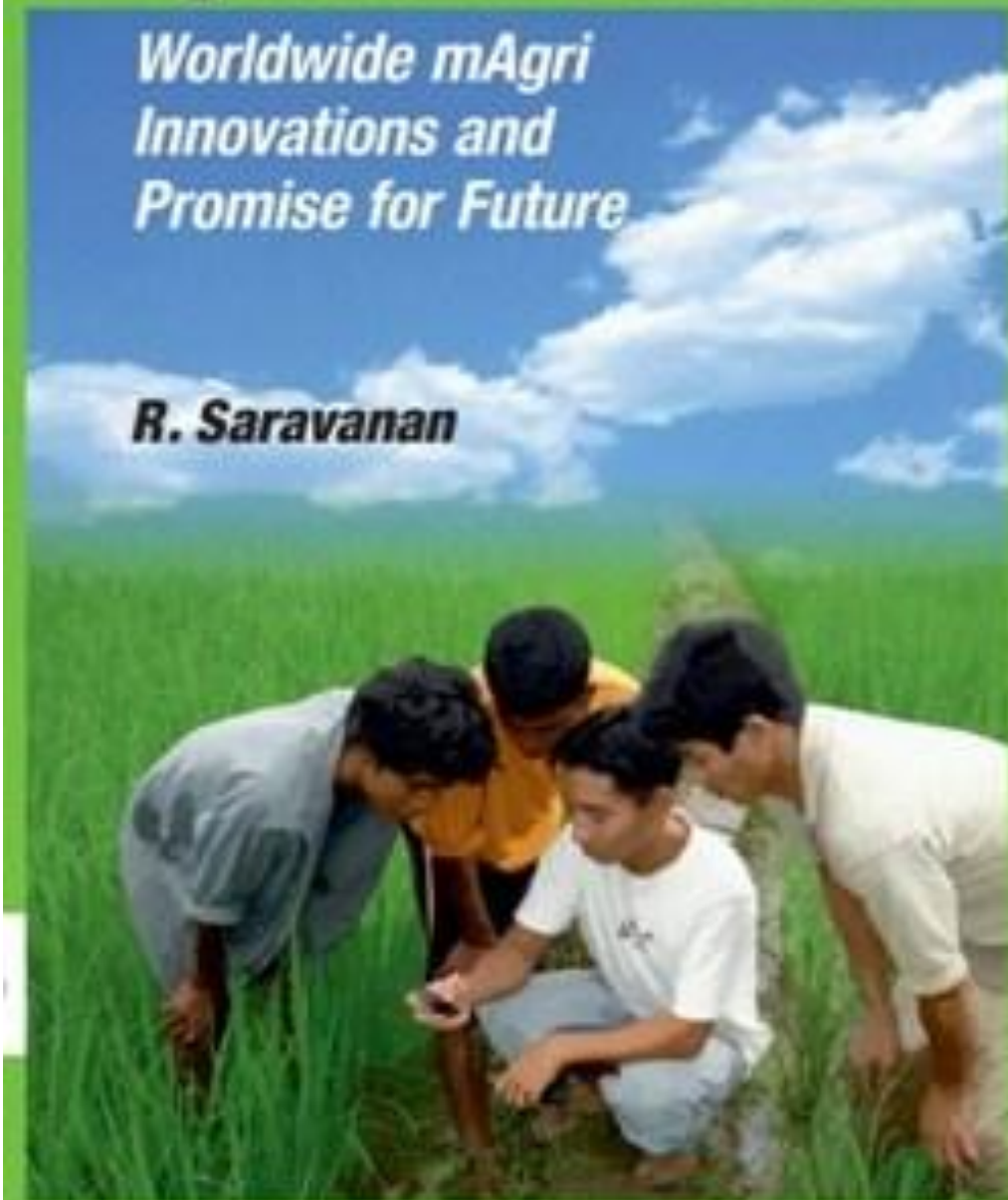


# ***Mobile Phones for Agricultural Extension***

***Worldwide mAgri  
Innovations and  
Promise for Future***

***R. Saravanan***



# Preface

Mobile phones have revolutionised the communication process and have become all-in-one magical devices to create, store, access and sharing of information for anytime and anywhere. Irrespective of age or gender, rural or urban, everyone uses a mobile phone today. Depending on ICT infrastructure, social structure and literacy, the frequency of use or the type of mobile phone may vary, but it has become a necessity and is no longer a luxury. It has become an integral part of everyday lives that its present estimated 6.8 billion subscriptions are almost equivalent to the world's population. All spheres of life have been touched by the device, including agriculture – the livelihood of millions across the world.

A study by Leonard Waverman of the London Business School found that adding ten extra mobile phones per hundred people in a typical developing country boosts growth in GDP per person by 0.6 percentage points. The experts also believe that data services like mobile-based agricultural advice, health care and money transfer can provide enormous economic and developmental benefits in poor countries. The last decade has seen a flourish in the number of mobile-based agricultural advisory services in the developing world particularly and more are added nearly every month in some parts of the world. These services have given timely information to the farmers, but more importantly, has given them improved bargaining position in developing countries which they rarely had earlier. And the reality that they are helping the farmers is not far removed from the hype surrounding them.

If we ever look at the way the use of mobile phones has changed the face of agriculture, it's fascinating. Services that started with farmers' help-lines accessed through landlines and occasional messages (SMS) have evolved slowly to multimodal and multimedia delivery of advisory and to m-agriculture applications for smart phones. This change has been characteristic in every country and continent-unique in their own-way with one common objective of empowering the farmers by sharing the information. Mobile phone applications for agriculture are evolving rapidly and are ever changing -newer applications and m-agriculture initiatives are added frequently to facilitate information access and sharing among the farmers and other stakeholders of agriculture. In this rapidly changing m-Agriculture scenario, this book is an attempt to document the evolution of mobile phone based agro-advisory services around the world.

The content of the book comprises of country chapters on mobile phone applications for agricultural extension from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe along with chapters on global review on m-agriculture initiatives, content generation process and socio-economic impact of mobile phone based agro-advisory services. This book delves into the development of mobile phone based agro-advisory and their content, delivery mode, business model and utility and provides an insight into the evolution of mobile phones as an extension tool in different countries across the globe.

The book will provide valuable insights on m-agriculture initiatives for agricultural extension around the world to agricultural students, researchers, extension professionals and policy makers across the globe both for understanding them and working on them. The lessons from the m-agriculture initiatives can guide the mode of implementation and evolution of mobile-based advisory services in agriculture to go beyond the pilot phase.

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2014  
Pasighat

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# Mobile Phones for Agricultural Extension Worldwide mAgri Innovations and Promise for Future

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**Readership :** Book is useful for those in the field of agricultural extension, agri-business firms, communication, media, tele-communications, information technology, mobile applications, and rural development.

Mobile phones have revolutionized the communication process and have become all-in-one magical devices for communicating at anytime and anywhere. The last decade has seen a flourish in the number of mobile based agro-advisory service initiatives in the developing countries and more are being added regularly in some parts of the world. Services that started with farmers' help-lines accessed through landlines and messages (SMS) have evolved slowly to multimodal and multimedia based delivery of advisory and to m-agriculture applications for smartphones. In this rapidly changing m-agriculture scenario, this book is an attempt to document the evolution of mobile phone based agro-advisory services around the world.

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