

A Systematic Mapping of the Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-Based Remote Agricultural Extension for Women Smallholders

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Abstract : This systematic mapping study explores the underrepresentation of women's contributions to farming in the Global South within the development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)-based extension methods. Despite women farmers constituting 70% of the agricultural labour force, their productivity is hindered by various constraints, including illiteracy, household commitments, and limited access to credit and markets. A systematic mapping approach was employed with the aim of identifying evidence gaps in existing ICT extension for women farmers. The data collection protocol follows a structured approach, incorporating key criteria for inclusion, exclusion, search strategy, and coding and the PICO strategy (Population, Intervention, Comparator, and Outcome). The results yielded 119 articles that qualified for inclusion. The findings highlight that mobile phone apps (WhatsApp) and radio/television programming are the primary extension methods employed while integrating ICT with training, field visits, and demonstrations are underutilized. Notably, the study emphasizes the inadequate attention to critical issues such as food security, gender equality, and attracting youth to farming within ICT extension efforts. These findings indicate a significant policy and practice gap, neglecting community-driven approaches that cater to women's specific needs and enhance their agricultural production. Map highlights the importance of refocusing ICT extension efforts to address women farmers' unique challenges, thereby contributing to their empowerment and improving agricultural practices.

Keywords : agricultural extension, ICT, women farmers, smallholders

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