International Fund for Agriculture Development

Comprehensive ICT4D Training for Diverse Audiences

TechChange partnered with the International Fund for Agricultural Development to provide an **internal ICT4D training curriculum**, including self-paced and blended learning.TechChange also created a set of **training modules for IFAD's external partners**.

About the Client

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is an international financial institution and specialized United Nations agency based in Rome. IFAD invests in rural people, empowering them to increase their food security, improve the nutrition of their families and increase their incomes.

A Multi-part Solution

When IFAD launched its first information and communications technology for development (ICT4D) strategy in 2020, **knowledge management and sharing** was a vital part. They turned to TechChange to create a comprehensive ICT4D training program for **internal agency staff** all over the world. Based on an internal needs assessment, TechChange proposed to create a comprehensive library of blended learning courses, split into "Fundamentals" and "Advanced" topics. From technology transformation within natural resource management to aiding market access within value chains and supporting adaptation to climate change, this library would include a wide range of technical content, developed by TechChange educators.

In parallel, IFAD launched their Digital Advisory Support Services for Accelerated Rural Transformation program, or DAS, to address the gap in digital tools and information access for smallholder farmers. Having already begun work on the fundamental and advanced courses for IFAD, TechChange partnered with Development Gateway and JengaLabs in 2022 to expand the reach of the DAS program with accessible trainings.

TechChange's role in the partnership has been to create **customized training for IFAD's external implementing partners, including the development of detailed technical content on ICT4D in agriculture**. Due to the partners' diverse operating environments TechChange worked to **localize the material** for key countries and regions, such as Malawi, Nigeria, and a regional Francophone Africa version (in French).

Services Used

Ideation Workshops

Asynchronous Learning

Subject Matter Experts (SME) Sourcing

Technical Content Development

Localization and Translation of Courses

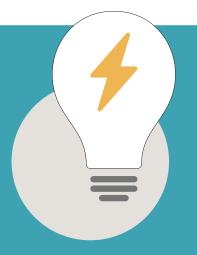Live Virtual Trainings (Synchronous learning)

Monitoring and Evaluation

Blended Learning

Key Stats

Nearly 80% of internal registrants participated in at least one Advanced class

100% of respondents said they were likely or very likely to use information from the class

100% of survey respondents for the courses indicated learning goals were achieved

Strong majority of DAS evaluation respondents said they now had a good sense of how to use the training concepts effectively in their work
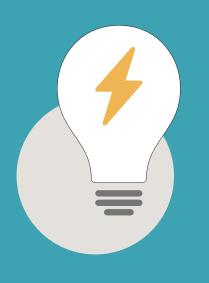
"Prior to enrolling, my grasp of ICT4Dev was limited. However, the training significantly enhanced my comprehension, particularly concerning ICT applications in agriculture (ICT4ag). I have now gained a comprehensive understanding of key challenges, notably the primary issue of accessing open source data."

Participant, Nigeria (DAS course on Principles of Digital Development)

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Human-centered Design in Action

TechChange relies on the principles of human-centered design to ensure that learners are involved in the course creation process. To initially identify and prioritize course content for the Basic course, TechChange staff conducted interviews and an ideation session with IFAD staff with varied technical specialties and experience levels, and solicited insights and feedback from our network of ICT4D subject matter experts. This input from the target audience ensured that course content met those needs, with practical case studies taken from IFAD and other international agencies. The resulting foundational course provides an introduction to the world of ICT4D in agriculture, including an overview of key concepts, terminology, best practices, and challenges that are necessary to understand in order to implement a project involving information and communications technology. It is currently available for public access on IFAD's e-learning platform.

TechChange followed the Fundamentals course with a set of Advanced courses in 2023. This time, TechChange staff facilitated three new ideation sessions with key contacts at IFAD, further collaborated with IFAD partners in a working session on learning objectives, and collaborated closely with three subject matter experts (SMEs) in the course topics. The advanced courses are designed to further IFAD staff's understanding of key approaches to integrate digital solutions, thus accelerating adoption of agricultural digital activities. Each consists of a masterclass live session and self-paced learning developed on Articulate Rise and hosted on IFAD's internal LMS and e-Learning website. Staying true to the principles of human-centered design, TechChange directly incorporated participant feedback from the Fundamentals course, as well as the ideation and working sessions into the development of course content.

Demand-driven Expansion of Learning

Starting in 2022, the IFAD DAS program offered their partners tailored support on integrating digital technology solutions, into existing or new programs, or into their institutions as a whole. As the **lead partner for building and delivering trainings,** TechChange developed additional blended learning courses on the **Digital Principles, Interoperability,** and **Rural Finance**, including customization and translation for local contexts in different African countries and regions. These courses are hosted on the TechChange platform, which provides IFAD with greater opportunities for data tracking and analysis including built-in pre/post surveys, module evaluations, demo metrics, and the ability to compare and contrast completion metrics for asynchronous and synchronous course work. The team also developed a localized in-person training on Monitoring and Evaluation to a cohort of learners in Nigeria. Thus far, the DAS Program has engaged directly with partners in Uzbekistan, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Nigeria, Ghana, and Malawi. Additional countries where DAS is focused will be added in the future, and the material further contextualized to local needs.

Results for the Future

At all levels, this program has helped participants within IFAD and its external partners to better understand and use technology for their work in sustainable agriculture and supporting farmer livelihoods. The majority of Advanced Course participants indicated that they learned a great deal of material and that they were likely to use it in their work. For DAS, course evaluations from Malawi and Nigeria show that the majority of participants reported the material was relevant and practical to their work. Initial results from Nigeria also indicate the majority of participants were likely to apply tools and resources to their projects' life cycles. Governmental supporters of the work in Nigeria have incorporated the principles and resources into their agricultural value chain transformation agenda, as featured in this news article.

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