



## Guest article

### **The importance of policy research in leveraging agri-based digital solutions in West Africa**

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The role of digitalisation in enhancing agricultural development in the global economy is well documented. In Ghana, following an improvement in the information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure, public and private institutions, NGOs, and development agencies have supported several initiatives aimed at developing, deploying and facilitating the adoption of digital technologies and services to enhance agricultural productivity.

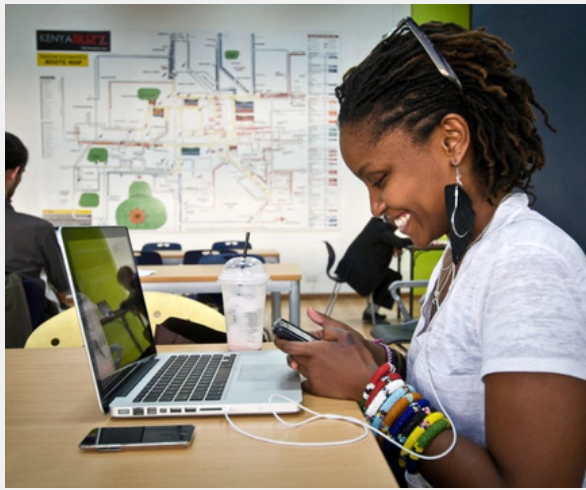
Currently, several firms are using ICT to provide services in the agricultural sector in the form of extension information, data capture, market linkages, financial and traceability services. The concept of innovation hubs and contests created opportunities for the youth to get involved in the development of digital applications through which these services are provided.

The major challenges, however, include low adoption of the technologies by the targets, limited incentives for improving service delivery, limited resources to effectively scale-out, poor internet connectivity in farming communities, and unwillingness of farmers to pay for the services.

The [AGriDI project](#) -funded by the OACPS R&I Programme- is supporting the development of digital solutions for solving agricultural production bottlenecks and enhancing effective market linkages. To determine how useful these digital solutions will be for farmers, it is important to understand how they are using and benefiting from the existing technologies and services.

The project “Enhancing farmers’ uptake of digital technologies through empirical research, innovation and policy intervention (EFUDTRIPI)” – funded by AGriDi and implemented by CSIR-STEPRI in Ghana will generate evidence on the level of use of digital technologies and services by farmers and the impacts on their professional activities. It will also identify the enablers, constraints, policy gaps and the interventions policy makers and digital services providers should make for a better use and adoption of digital solutions.

The project contributes to policy analyses leading to improved policies for digital innovation.



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Adana Mahase-Gibson and Chandra Degia

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