

Practical Answers

Meeting the Needs of Smallholders for Technical Knowledge



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Objectives

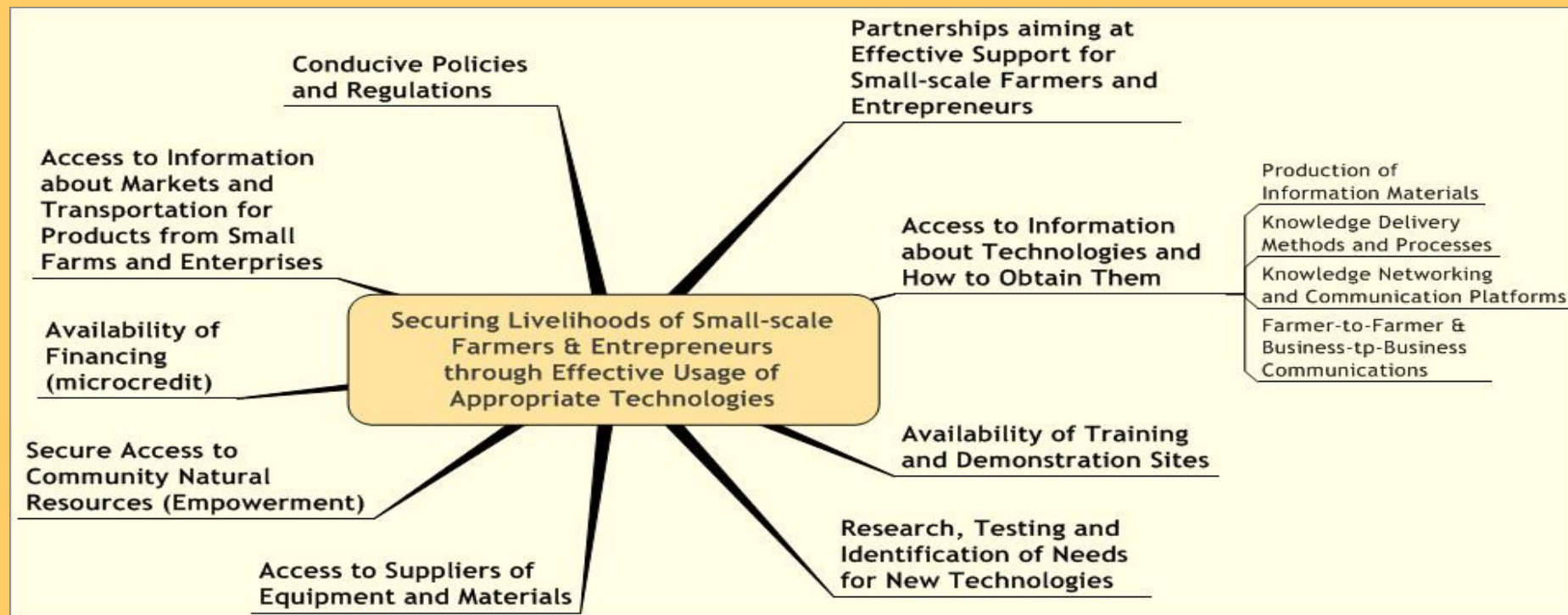
- a) Practical Answers has made an evident contribution to poverty alleviation in regions covered by its services.**
- b) Sustainable network of knowledge centres/nodes at local and global levels in selected countries.**

The Problem

“Millions of poor farmers and smallholders around the world are in need of small scale technologies to secure their livelihoods.”

The proposition is that the effective application of appropriate technologies and gaining relevant knowledge will help poor people get out of poverty.

The Context



Proposed Solution

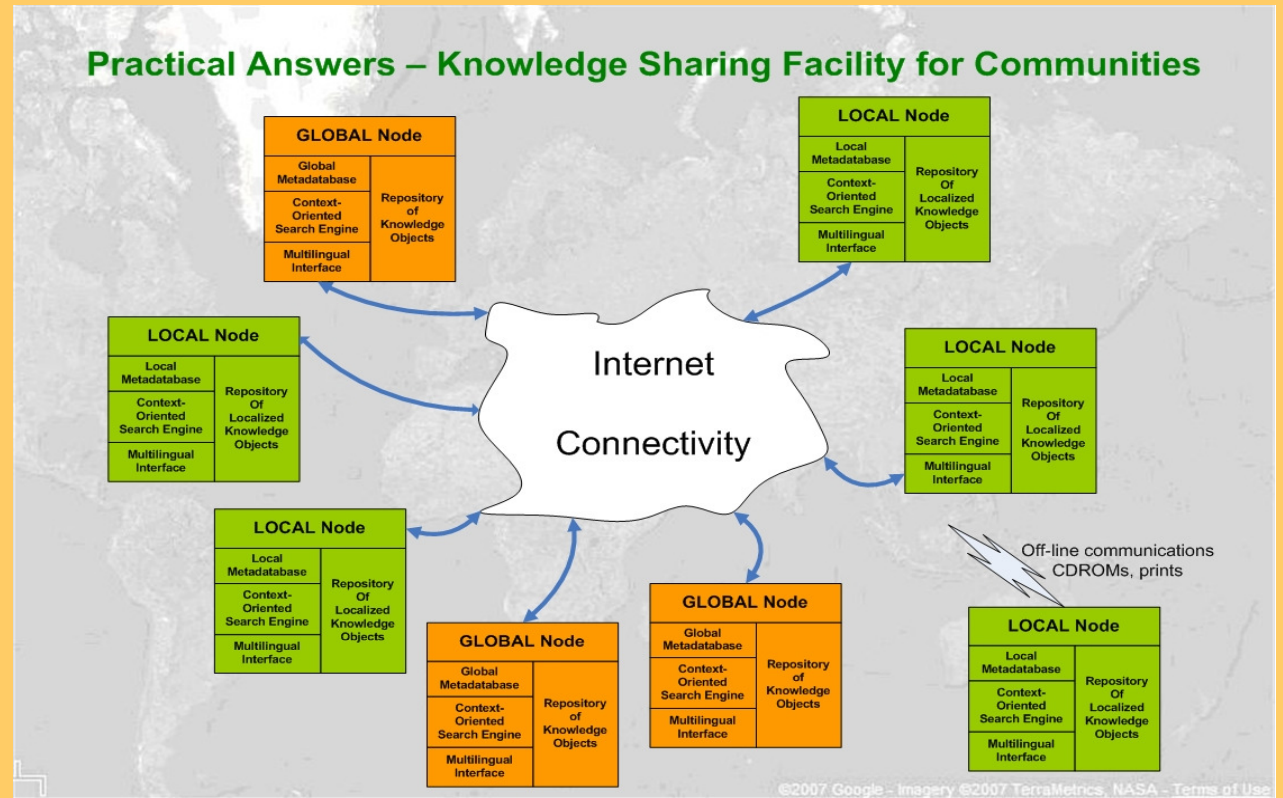
Network of global and local nodes (metadatabases)

Local node (localized and contextualized knowledge objects)

Global node (diverse global knowledge repositories)

Electronic and traditional means of communication

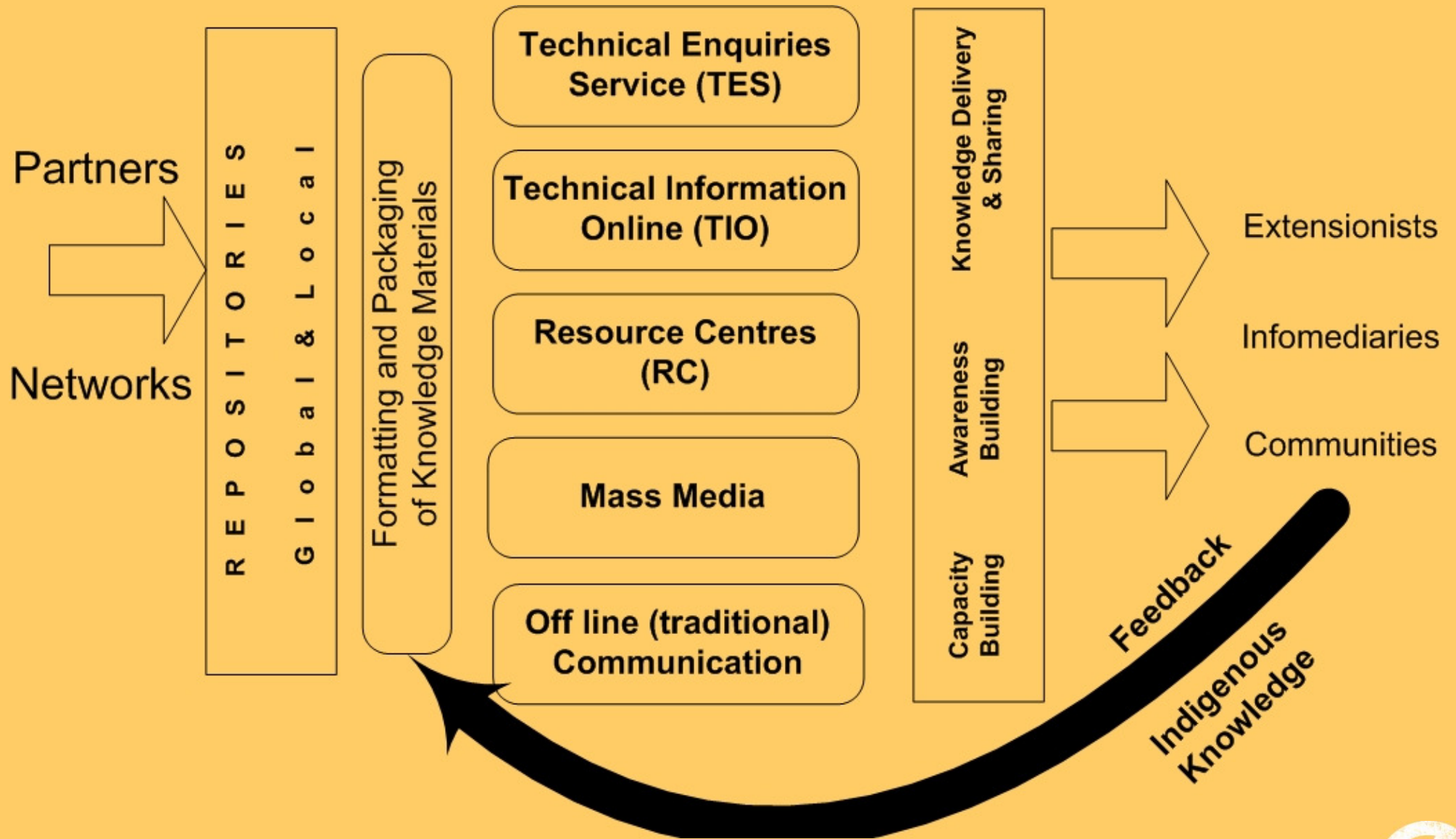
Problem solving approach:
knowledge – supply – financing – application – market - feedback



Knowledge materials:

- Relevant (contextualized)
- Comprehensible
- In appropriate format and language
- Created in cooperation with local experts and users
- Based on convergence of academic and indigenous knowledge

PRACTICAL ANSWERS – Operational Model



Knowledge Objects

A knowledge object, in this context, could be anything that contains/describes specific knowledge, for example, a technical brief in print or electronic format, video clip, map, database, or traditional communication media such as puppet shows or street theatres, or a combination of all of these.



video



video




















































A technical brief from Practical Action (available in print and online)

A puppet show in Bangladesh Environmental protection

A cultural event in Chitral, Pakistan included live demonstration of bio-sand water filter

Distributed integrated metadatabases will contain comprehensive data about available knowledge objects including user feedback and usage of acquired knowledge.

Suitability of Formats

Format \ User	Technical Brief	Research Report	Database	Video film	Multimedia Presentation	Live demo	Face-to-Face	Email	Voice email / Phone	Radio TV
Nomadic or Tribal Community										
Farmer (educated)										
Farmer (uneducated)										
Policy maker										
Government official										
NGO staff										
Extension worker										
Community-based org.										
Academic										
Development Agency										

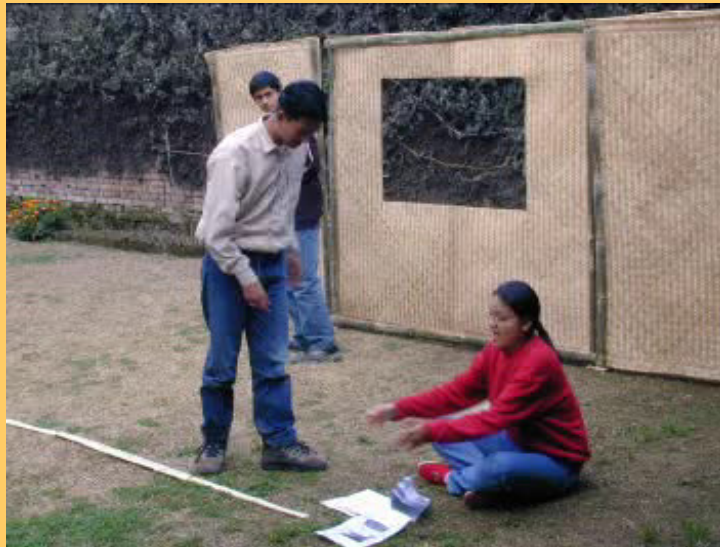
Example of an Enquiry

A farmer may enquire about new better methods for sloping land cultivation.

A farmer will contact the local Practical Answers node or ask the extension worker to obtain the information. A search in local node metadatabase may produce a list of relevant local knowledge objects including a report concerning the local practices, technical briefs about equipment used by local farmers, technical briefs about techniques to build and maintain terraces, a short video produced by recent development project in the area, a success story (audio recording) from a farmer who recently used new machines, and a slide show presenting traditional effective methods.

Further dialog with the system may narrow the search to knowledge objects that concern only the equipment used in sloping land cultivation and information about suppliers that may require broader search including other nodes.

A final list of knowledge objects will be reviewed by the user (farmer, extension worker or node operator) to determine the information delivery method. The user may view the selected knowledge objects on the computer monitor (extension worker could demonstrate the objects on the laptop), listen to audio clips, or print relevant documents.



Shadow puppets show, Nepal

video



Sloping land, Bhutan



Thank you