

Drivers of Use of Information and Communication Technologies by Farm Households: The Case of Smallholder Farmers in Kenya

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Abstract

Smallholder farmers' access to markets has traditionally been constrained by lack of market information. The desire to strengthen farmer access to market has seen the emergence of a number of projects that employ ICT tools in the provision of market information. This study assesses the conditioners of the use of ICT tools in general and mobile phones in particular by smallholder farmers for agricultural transactions. The study finds that several farmer, farm and capital endowment factors affect the use of ICT tools and mobile phones. Specifically, age, occupation, nearness to output market, number of crop enterprises, farming experience literacy and crop income explain the use of tools while gender, nearness to output market, household size, owning a phone, level of literacy, crop income and value of assets explain the intensity of use of the mobile for agricultural transaction purposes. It discusses the implications of these findings for policy.