

# THE TALKING BOOK

## KNOWLEDGE SCENARIO



**Making knowledge accessible  
to people living in poverty.**

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# Problem: Access to Knowledge in Rural Areas

**Context:** Rural communities in developing regions with the following:

- No electricity
- Poor roads
- Very low literacy levels
- Primarily subsistence farmers
- Many languages spoken in the same region

**Problem:** Residents lack the knowledge they need to improve their lives.

- Extension workers from NGOs and governments infrequently visit villages (1-3 times per year) to spread information about:
  - Health (e.g. oral rehydration therapy)
  - Agriculture (e.g. how to increase crop yield)
  - Microfinance/business (e.g. how to create a community bank)
- During these short visits, residents are flooded with valuable information, but much of it will be forgotten when it is needed.
  - A 1-2 hour visit may detail dozens of tips and best practices.
  - Most information is not immediately relevant.
- This method is expensive (costing the organization up to \$40 per visit).



# Solution: The Talking Book

- ❑ Simple, durable, and portable audio computer
- ❑ Target market: People living in poverty, particularly those without literacy skills or access to electricity
- ❑ Powered by local batteries or rechargeable
- ❑ Users can:
  - ▣ Record and play 70 hours of audio messages
  - ▣ Copy recordings between devices
  - ▣ Use interactive audio applications
  - ▣ Access recordings by category



# How Is the Talking Book Being Used?

## Record messages

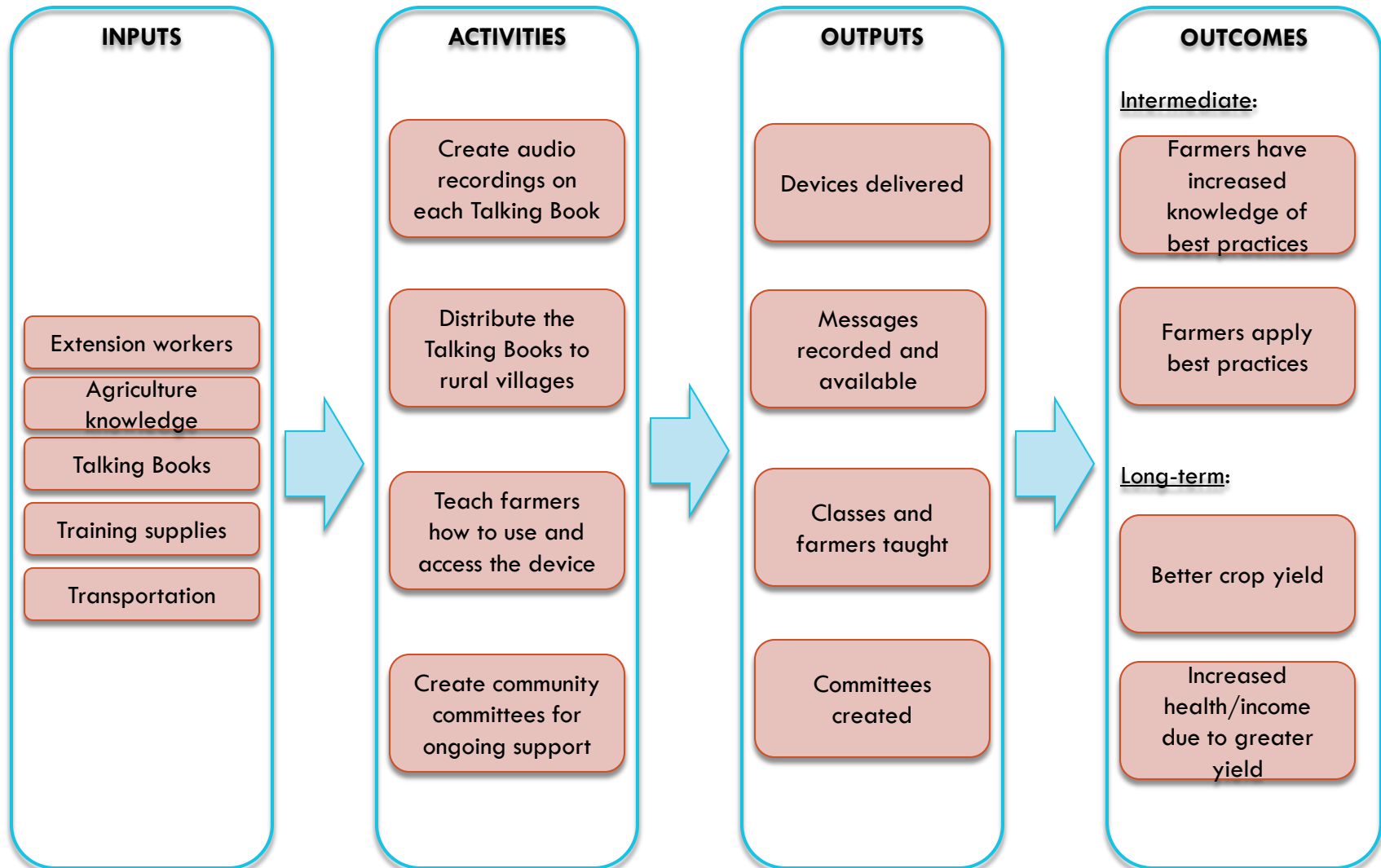
- ❑ **Health.**
  - ❑ Monthly guidance to pregnant women; feeding and weaning techniques.
  - ❑ Information about disease prevention, including diseases for specific seasons.
  - ❑ Engaging messages for people waiting to be treated in rural clinics.
- ❑ **Gender Equality.** How to navigate legal processes for domestic violence victims.
- ❑ **Agriculture.** Guidance to increase crop yield (outlined later).
- ❑ **Microcredit.** How to create a village savings and loan program.

## Create custom applications

- ❑ **Health.** Situational health guidance given after a series of questions.
- ❑ **Vocabulary.** Testing students using the embedded vocabulary feature.
- ❑ **Practice tests.** Practice tests that help students study for standardized exams.
- ❑ **Class absence.** Daily lessons for those who miss class.
- ❑ **Book reading.** Audio books for families to practice reading at home.



# Logic Model: Agriculture Example



# Usage Scenarios

## Scenario 1: Organization to client

An organization enables its clients to access existing knowledge on demand.

- **Literacy and education.** To educate students (children and adults alike).
- **Agriculture.** To spread tips and best practices about how to maximize crop yield.
- **Health.** To spread life-saving information to those who lack access to sufficient healthcare.
- **Blind communities.** To spread information to those who are visually impaired.

## Scenario 2: Peer to peer

Residents create and share knowledge with each other.

- To spread their expertise on a subject
- To preserve their traditions and cultural heritage
- To report news that is not otherwise publicized
- For entertainment purposes



# Scenario 1: Organization to Client

*An organization enables its clients to access existing knowledge on demand.*

## How it works:

1. An organization has an existing way of either:
  - ▣ Teaching individuals, but they want to maximize limited resources (material costs/staff time).
  - ▣ Distributing knowledge, but they want clients to reference the audio knowledge on demand.
2. The organization purchases Talking Books. Note that this is a one time cost—once devices are in a community, they can be used continually by all.
3. The organization does either or both of the following to customize the devices:
  - ▣ **Records messages.**
  - ▣ **Creates custom applications.** They convey the information in a more interactive way by adding:
    - **Embedded hyperlinks.** Users can click a button to find the definition of a word.
    - **Multiple choice.** Teachers can test students to assess how well their students learn.
    - **Dynamic navigation.** Users can answer a set of questions to receive custom guidance.
4. The organization distributes the custom Talking Books (either to individuals or communities to share).

**Note:** In a related scenario, the organization requests feedback from recipients. This way, extension workers do not have to summarize feedback, but record it first hand.

## Benefits:

This scenario enables the organization to increase:

- ▣ **Efficiency.** They reach more clients with the same budget (e.g. staff/fuel costs).
- ▣ **Effectiveness.** They increase the impact of their knowledge distribution by enabling on-demand access.

# Scenario 2: Peer to Peer

*Residents create and distribute recordings among themselves*

## How it works:

1. A microbusiness purchases Talking Books to sell or rent for profit.
2. Consumers record messages and distribute the messages to fit their needs and desires.
3. The demand for Talking Books rises with the number of recordings that are shared.

## Benefits:

The recordings create a virtual library that is:

- ❑ **Unique.** For rural areas, this may be the first means of preserving information.
- ❑ **Extensible.** The information could be used with other technologies in the future, such as mobile devices.

## Examples:

Consumers could record messages:

- ❑ To spread their expertise on a subject
- ❑ To preserve their traditions and cultural heritage
- ❑ For entertainment purposes



# Summary

The Talking Book allows you to spread your message:

- **More efficiently.** Distribute your knowledge to more clients by reducing travel and time costs.
- **More effectively.** Increase the impact of your current knowledge distribution with on-demand availability.



**To learn more about how Talking Books can increase your impact, see <http://literacybridge.org> or email [info@literacybridge.org](mailto:info@literacybridge.org).**