

Storytelling in VeSeL

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Context

- VeSeL project: working with communities in rural Kenya to develop *needs-based* solutions
 - Teaching – local school with ICT
 - Farming – seed/water management
- Strong focus on communication underpinning participatory design
 - Build understandings
 - Team
 - Wider context
- Storytelling has an important role to play

Story 1: Need for a seed bank

- Story used by local community group to indicate the need for a seed bank
- Kambu, Kenya
- Farming family still hungry when they has eaten all of the produce
- So, the ate the seeds from their plants
- Following season they had nothing to sow and died
- Seed bank decorated with mural







Story 1: Need for a seed bank

- Intention: self-help group (of farmers) should put aside some seeds in the community seed bank every season
- Local community-based organisation supporting farmer self-help groups

Story 2: Organic Farmer

- Ran a small organic holding – local context
- Learnt the techniques from a radio programme
- Fermenting some pesticide



Story 3: School mural



Why storytelling?

- Characteristics
 - Image and text
 - Highly pragmatic
- Share experience
 - Rich and descriptive
 - Easily accessible
- Potential to design of new resources
- Challenge: Look for commonalities across 'cases'

Longer term goals

- Stories support the design of new tools and resources
- Commonalities → Design objects
- *Design objects are simultaneously a representation of existing knowledge and a means for constructing new knowledge by users*
- The rationale behind a 'public' policy is twofold:
- it creates a possibility for unexpected feedback and contributions from experts from outside the group and
- it enriches our offering: by exposing the social configurations and dynamics from which our designs emerge, we enable others to evaluate and potentially adapt them to serve their own needs and contexts

Further reading

- <http://lp.noe-kaleidoscope.org>
- Winters, N. and Mor, Y. (2008) IDR: a participatory methodology for interdisciplinary design in technology enhanced learning, *Computers & Education*, 50(2), 579-600 (see telearn.org)
- Winters, N. & Mor, Y (forthcoming) Dealing with abstraction: case study generalisation as a method for eliciting design patterns", *Computer in Human Behavior*

For more

VeSel project

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