



COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE WORKER

Application Name(s): CKW Search, CKW Survey, CKW Pulse, Ag Info SMS Channel

Area of Focus: Farm extension services

How it works: Trusted community members are identified and trained as Community Knowledge Workers (CKWs) to disseminate and collect agriculture-related information via Android phones. CKWs are set up with what Grameen refers to as a “business in a box”, including an off-grid charging solution and marketing material.

Grameen is currently working with 605 CKWs in 13 districts of Uganda—with another 100 CKWs currently being recruited in 2 additional districts—who provide free agricultural information and advice to rural farmers (including crop & animal information, market prices, weather information, transportation and inputs). Grameen’s content database is also pre-loaded on the local memory of the Android phones, so that CKWs can still have access to content even when they are out of network range. Connection to the mobile internet network is only necessary if they want to download any new content. Grameen plans to expand the service to allow farmers to connect directly to bulk buyers, to include an agricultural call center, and to disseminate sub-county level prices.

Technology used: Mobile smart phones (including SMS and voice), mobile applications, CRM (Salesforce.com)

Implementer/Funder: Grameen Foundation’s AppLab in partnership with MTN-Uganda. It receives funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation with cost-sharing from anchor partners, such as the World Food Programme, NAADS (Uganda’s national agricultural extension service) and East African Dairy Development (EADD) project.

Fees: Services are provided for free to the farmer. Grameen collects fees from private sector and development agency consumers for its data collection services, technology development services and field force deployment.

Primary Markets: Uganda

Users: Small hold farmers via trained CKWs (approximately 500 – 750 households per CKW). Of the current users, 43% live on less than a dollar a day and 28% are female. Up-to-date information on users can be found via the publicly accessible [CKW Dashboard](#).

Business Model: Grameen estimates that CKWs earn upwards of \$2/day after costs (for things such as phone repayment, insurance and airtime) for providing information to and collecting surveys from farmers in their community. In addition, some CKWs provide telecom services such as battery charging and airtime. It is still too early to tell whether or not this model will be sustainable without outside funding.

Impact: Grameen plans to conduct an impact assessment by 2012. Although a CKW pilot report from 2009 found that the information CKWs provide to farmers leads to increased productivity and revenues.¹

For more information visit: <http://www.grameenfoundation.applab.org/ckw/section/index>

Sources: Grameen AppLab Uganda

¹ <http://grameenfoundation.org/sites/default/files/Grameen-Foundation-Community-Knowledge-Worker-Pilot-Report.pdf>

DISCLAIMER

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This profile is supported by USAID's Fostering Agriculture Competitiveness Employing Information Communication Technologies (FACET) project under the Financial Integration, Economic Leveraging, Broad-Based Dissemination and Support Leaders with Associates award (FIELD-Support LWA). It was written by Josh Woodard of FHI 360 (jwoodard@fhi360.org). FACET offers on-demand field support to help missions with the challenges of using these ICT interventions in agricultural development. To learn more about field support options, contact Judy Payne, ICT Advisor, (jpayne@usaid.gov).