



M-KILIMO (AKA KENYA FARMERS' HELPLINE)

Area of Focus: Agricultural information

How it works: M-Kilimo enables farmers and extension agents to receive real-time answers to questions on agriculture related subjects, such as market price information, crop and livestock questions, weather forecasts, and agricultural products and services. The backbone of this service is a call center staffed by a team of trained agriculture experts that operates around the clock. Experts use a growing content management system to answer calls in real-time. If the live expert is unable to answer the question in real-time, they reach out to second-line, subject area specialists, and then return the call with an answer within 24 hours. Information is available in both English, Swahili, and other local languages.

Technology used: Mobile phones

Implementer/Funder: KenCall, Kenya's largest call center, with funding from a grant by the Rockefeller Foundation through the GSMA Development Fund for an 18-month pilot phase, which began in October 2009. KenCall also works with various partners on content assessment, including KARI, Infonet Biovision, aWHERE, and ACDI/VOCA.

Fees: Free. Callers only pay the standard mobile usage rates to place the call.

Primary Markets: Kenya. Although, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) has expressed interest in expanding M-Kilimo to 8 countries.¹

Users: Smallholder farmers and agricultural extension agents (45,000 registered farmers in March 2011)²

Business Model: KenCall plans to try to commercialize the service and anticipates that it will be financially self-supporting by the time donor funding ends.³ It is not yet clear how much progress has been made on this.

Impact: As of March 2011, 38,000 questions have been asked and answered, although KenCall has not yet released any specific impact data.

For more information visit: <http://www.m-kilimo.com/>

Sources: ¹ [Interview](#) with James Nyoro, the Rockefeller Foundation's Africa Office Managing Director in March 2011.

² [Presentation](#) given at the ICT4D conference hosted in Lusaka, Zambia on March 29, 2011.

³ KenCall [entry application](#) for the 2010 East African CSR Awards.

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