



IKSL'S GREEN SIM CARD

Area of Focus: Agricultural information

How it works: IKSL, a joint venture between IFFCO (a large fertilizer cooperative with 60 million farmers) and telecom companies Bharti Airtel and Star Mobitel, is a special SIM card that includes access to a number of agricultural information services. Subscribers receive 5 free one-minute voice messages each day in their local language on topics such as crop management, market rates, weather forecasts, and government schemes, to name a few. In addition, they also have access to a live Helpline service where they can consult with experienced professionals for solutions to agricultural problems they are facing.

All of the agricultural content for IKSL exists within an Integrated Information Management System, which was developed as part of a GSMA Foundation grant provided to IKSL. The system tracks the location of its users and the topics of any calls they have made to the Helpline to help better customize their future experience. In addition, IKSL calls users to inquire about their specific areas of interest, which will then be used to customize the daily voice messages they receive.

Technology used: Mobile phones

Implementer/Funder: In addition to its own capital, IKSL has also received a \$450,000 grant through the GSMA Foundation's mAgri program to enhance its content management system and to develop new content.

Fees: Standard phone charges apply for accessing the Helpline, although the service itself is provided at no additional charge.

Primary Markets: IKSL currently serves 18 states in India. Airtel is also currently exploring how to adapt this service and implement it with mobile network operators it owns in sub-Saharan Africa.

Users: From April 2010 through March 2011, the service had over 1 million active users (based on the most recent data available on IKSL's website).

Business Model: Although it has received outside funding to support certain enhancements, IKSL generated roughly US\$4 million in profit in 2010. Revenue is generated based off a fixed amount paid by Airtel for each new subscriber and a percentage of talk time recharges.¹

Impact: According to a usage survey cited by the GSMA Foundation, 74% of Helpline callers and 64% of individuals who listen to the daily voice messages "have implemented or plan to implement the information received."² It is not yet clear what substantive impacts this is having on farmer yields or income.

For more information visit: <http://www.iksl.in/>

Sources: ¹ <http://business.in.com/article/work-in-progress/a-rich-harvest-the-winwin-initiative-to-help-farmers/22412/0>
² <http://gsmworld.com/documents/iksl-case-study-v2.pdf>

DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Agency for International Development or the U.S. Government.

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. 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).