

# mKisan

*Using mobile technologies to strengthen farmer-extension-expert-linkages in India*



## Background

There are nearly six billion mobile phone subscriptions in the world today. Four out of five new connections are happening in the developing world. ILRI aims to harness the power of digital information and communication technologies (ICTs) to decrease access barriers to extension services and reach larger numbers of livestock producers with actionable information.

## Project goal

The purpose of mKisan is to develop a comprehensive agro-advisory service for smallholders with access to a mobile phone in India.

## Key activities

Different mobile channels, such as voice messages, text messages, on-demand videos, and a Farmer Helpline, will be used. This suite of agricultural advisory services on mobile networks will offer affordable and effective advice to smallholders on relevant crop and livestock issues and provide a platform for service providers, interest groups and experts alike to exchange knowledge and experiences of interest for the majority of farmers in each area.

## Anticipated results

By July 2014, mKisan will have developed a viable business model for large scale delivery of mobile-enabled agro-advisory services. It has four broad objectives:

- Provide daily bulletins such as agro-meteorology forecasts, crop pest attacks, livestock diseases outbreaks. This will support farmers in making better decisions about their farm and animal management.
- Strengthen market linkages by providing up to date information on the prevailing market prices for different commodities. This will help farmers sell their produce in premium market destinations and increase their bargaining power in agricultural markets.
- Improve access to advisory services by providing information on local service provision sources e.g. vaccine availability and deworming drugs. Information about where to get these simple services over mobile can improve productivity at a minimal cost.
- Contribute to empower women by reducing information asymmetries due to gender disparity.

## Implementation strategies and partnerships

The project is implemented in India in partnership with Handygo Technologies, a mobile value adding service provider, CABI South Asia and Digital Green, an NGO for video-enabled extension.

The project is part of the broader mFarmer initiative launched by GSMA in 2011, supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development.



### Contact

Pier Paolo Ficarelli  
ILRI, New Delhi  
p.ficarelli@cgiar.org



BILL & MELINDA  
GATES foundation



[ilri.org](http://ilri.org)

Box 30709, Nairobi 00100, Kenya  
Phone: + 254 20 422 3000  
Fax: +254 20 422 3001  
Email: [ILRI-Kenya@cgiar.org](mailto:ILRI-Kenya@cgiar.org)

Box 5689, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
Phone: +251 11 617 2000  
Fax: +251 11 617 2001  
Email: [ILRI-Ethiopia@cgiar.org](mailto:ILRI-Ethiopia@cgiar.org)

other offices  
China • India • Mali  
Mozambique • Nigeria • Tanzania  
Thailand • Uganda • Vietnam

*Better lives through livestock*  
ILRI is a member of the CGIAR Consortium

