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Awaaz.De Social Impact Case Study: Ambuja

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Enlightening Rural Farmers in India

USE CASE

Providing university agricultural information through voice messages.



PARTNER



Gujarat, India

BACKGROUND

As the CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) division of Ambuja Cements Ltd., Ambuja Cement Foundation (ACF) has served rural communities surrounding their cement manufacturing sites since 1993.

With their mission to “energise, involve and enable communities to realize their potential,” ACF strives to tackle issues pertaining to water management, agriculture, skills, women’s empowerment, health, and education, based upon the needs of the local community. By working to solve these issues they promote social and economic development for long-lasting change.

Since starting in rural communities around Ambuja’s main cement plant in Kodinar, Gujarat, ACF has been able to replicate their CSR efforts in 950 villages in 21 different locations and are continuing to grow.



THE CHALLENGES

Many rural farmers across India face challenges to their livelihoods exacerbated by limited access to trustworthy agricultural information. Farmers typically do not have any formal training experience but rely on techniques and practices passed down over generations. Consequently, farmers struggle with exploitation by agro-shops, inability to adjust to climate change, and low productivity rates.

AWAAZ.DE'S SOLUTIONS

Awaaz.De and ACF have created a mobile advisory service called 'Krishi Mobile' to send relevant and timely agricultural information to rural smallholder farmers. Using Awaaz.De's platform, farmers receive personalised advice through pre-recorded voice messages broadcast to their mobile phones, even feature phones without internet access. The communication covers crop prices, fertilisers/pesticides, plant protection, agronomy, animal husbandry, and water management. Farmers can also dial into the platform to ask questions or clarify advice from an agricultural expert. This interactive service reaches large numbers of farmers, who may have limited literacy skills, currently connecting 8,000 registered farmers with advice from six to eight university scientists.

OUR IMPACT



11,702

unique members



68%

avg. pickup rate



7,840

call pick ups



70%

avg. completion rate



VOICES FROM THE LAST MILE



Satish (30 yrs)

Farmer & Agricultural Machine Operator

“My income increased 20-25%. With my new money, I bought a new farming machine and can provide for my two children’s education. I used to use 2-3 pesticides for groundnuts but learned about one solution to solve all of the problems through the messages.”



Vipul (28 yrs)

Ambuja Village Coordinator & Farmer

“Earlier, costs were higher than profits, but now I have had a 50% increase in income with a 70% increase in growth. I have improved my old house in ways that I can experience life like in the cities even though I still live in a village.”



*Research, writing and photos provided by Maya Tromburg and Nithya Vemireddy, of Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship.
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