



2017 **DIGITAL** **DEVELOPMENT** AWARDS



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

The image shows a field of young corn plants in the foreground, with a blue-tinted background overlay. The text is centered and reads:

Like railways and roads before them, the ongoing digital revolution is unleashing waves of innovation and transforming the way in which businesses, consumers and governments operate and interact with each other.

This new-found access to information and services is empowering individuals, opening new channels for delivering more effective and scalable services, driving financial inclusion, spurring greater participation in the formal economy, and enabling a more adaptive, data-driven approach to development.

USAID has a long and rich tradition of transforming development through innovation. In an effort to celebrate USAID missions, bureaus, offices and partners that are embracing cutting-edge technologies and advanced data analysis to accelerate impact, USAID's Global Development Lab is sponsoring the first-ever Digital Development Awards (Digis). As part of the Catalyst Awards, the Digis and Innovation to Action Awards

are an important part of a broader culture of innovation at USAID that seeks to catalyze the next generation of breakthrough innovations and advance our mission of reducing poverty and strengthening democratic governance. The Digis recognize USAID projects and activities that embrace best practices in the application of digital technologies and data-driven approaches to achieve their development objectives.

All USAID and implementing partner staff working on a USAID-funded project, activity, or program were eligible to apply, regardless of the size, region, or portfolio of the activity. Submissions were evaluated through the lens of the Principles for Digital Development and across the following categories: Integration, Adaptation, Analysis and Facilitation.

BY THE NUMBERS

125

USAID PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

from around the world applied for the Digi Awards, demonstrating their use of innovative technology to address urgent development problems.



APPLICATIONS REPRESENTED 5 AREAS OF TECHNICAL FOCUS

50

Digital Inclusion

16

Digital Information Systems

13

Digital Finance

14

Advanced Data and Geospatial Analysis

33



Cross-cutting

PROJECTS SPANNING 10 PRIORITY SECTORS



HEALTH

— 46 —



AGRICULTURE

— 25 —



EDUCATION

— 13 —



ECONOMIC GROWTH

— 10 —



DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE

— 10 —



CROSS-CUTTING

— 7 —



ENVIRONMENT

— 6 —



HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

— 4 —



WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

— 3 —



ENERGY

— 2 —

OF THE

125

applications submitted
for the Digi awards,

PRINCIPLE OF DIGITAL
DEVELOPMENT
BEST REPRESENTED



BE DATA DRIVEN

PRINCIPLE OF DIGITAL
DEVELOPMENT
LEAST REPRESENTED



ADDRESS PRIVACY
AND SECURITY

BIODIVERSITY AND WATERSHEDS IMPROVED FOR STRONGER ECONOMY AND ECOSYSTEM RESILIENCE (B+WISER)

USAID/
Philippines

The Challenge During the last century, the Philippines lost nearly 75 percent of its forests. The remaining 7 million hectares continue to be under pressure from illegal logging and slash and burn farming, driving forest-dependent species to the brink of extinction. Loss of forest also leaves the Philippines more vulnerable to natural disasters, affects water and air quality and negatively affects livelihoods. Yet, patrolling the isolated forests to counter deforestation and degradation is extremely difficult given the Philippines' diverse terrain over more than 7,000 islands.

The Approach USAID's B+WISER project, implemented by Chemonics, teamed up with Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to develop the Lawin Forest and Biodiversity Protection System, which revolutionizes how the Philippines prevents forest destruction. Using open source software, including the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART), Lawin enhances data collection, analysis and

access. Through Lawin, forest rangers digitally record observations about forest conditions, species and threats to provide georeferenced, up-to-date information that inform DENR's forest protection actions at all levels.

Why it Won The Philippines is now the first and largest user of SMART for forest protection in the world. Lawin combines mobile data collection, geospatial analysis and cloud-based data aggregation to improve decision making at local and national levels. Designed with the user from inception, including DENR staff, local stakeholders and indigenous communities using open source platforms, Lawin has quickly gone to scale. DENR has adopted Lawin, which has fostered local ownership and sustainability. Now, over 7.4 million acres, larger than the size of the state of Maryland, are under improved management.



Credit: B+Wiser



Credit: Diana Mrazikova/Digital Green Ethiopia

DIGITAL INTEGRATION TO AMPLIFY AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION

USAID/
Ethiopia and
Feed the
Future

The Challenge Over 80 percent of Ethiopia's population of about 80 million live in rural areas, with most households subsisting primarily on agriculture to make ends meet. Despite the importance of agriculture to Ethiopia's economy, yields for smallholder farmers remain significantly low, primarily due to limited adoption of irrigation practices, improved seed varieties and fertilizer. Although Ethiopia has a sizable agricultural extension workforce, traditionally it has been driven by supply, which has limited the adoption of inputs and best practices.

The Approach People are most open to information when it comes from sources and contexts with which they can identify. No less is true in Ethiopia, where USAID and a consortium of partners led by Digital Green—Awaaz.De, Dimagi and Farm Radio International—are using locally produced video, radio, interactive voice response and mobile data collection combined with traditional extension workers to

spread information about new agricultural technologies and best practices to smallholder farmers. Nearly one third of the farmers reached have adopted at least one new practice—40 percent of whom are female farmers.

Why it Won The project takes a collaborative and innovative approach in applying relevant, localized digital content to improve existing agricultural extension practices in close partnership with Ethiopia's Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources and regional bureaus of agriculture. The consortium utilizes the strengths of each member to integrate multiple open source digital platforms that reinforce and complement the extension messages. Rigorous data collection, monitoring and learning continuously improve service delivery and inform decision making.

SANITATION SERVICE DELIVERY/CLEAN TEAM MOBILE MONEY TRANSITION

USAID/
West Africa

The Challenge An estimated 20 million Ghanaians do not have a toilet at home. The problem is particularly acute for Ghana's urban poor who must rely on expensive and often unsanitary public facilities. In Kumasi alone, over 40 percent of the population must use public toilets; where often one toilet serves 40,000 people.

The Approach Recognizing the need for affordable, in-home toilets, Clean Team, a Ghanaian social enterprise set up by Water & Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP), provides in-home toilets to low-income urban families and safely collects and disposes of the waste each week for a low monthly fee. Serving customers with very little disposable income, Clean Team utilizes mobile money to enable customers to make cashless payments in amounts and at times that are convenient for them, eliminating unreliable cash transactions.

Why it Won Clean Team uses digital tools in sanitation services to meet an urgent community health need. Expanded use of mobile money payments also gives convenient access to other financial services, such as savings, credit and insurance. Clean Team partnered with MTN, the mobile money market leader in Ghana, and serves as an agent, which allows customers to pay directly into their Clean Team account. To date, the program has transitioned over 95 percent of its customers to its mobile money payment plan. The mobile money platform has been integrated into Clean Team's mobile-based enterprise system, providing real-time data for businesses and payment monitoring to ensure program efficiency.

After a four-year pilot program, Clean Team is building for sustainability and scale – looking to reach 5,000 homes within the next two years. Improving cash flow, customer payment options and reducing the cost of collections are just three ways in which the mobile money platform is contributing to these goals.



Credit: Clean Team Ghana



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Credit: ADVANCE II Project

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND VALUE CHAIN ENHANCEMENT PROJECT (ADVANCE II)

USAID/Ghana

The Challenge

Low literacy rates and the traditional use of family names without first names in northern Ghana made it difficult for USAID's ADVANCE II project to use paper rosters to accurately monitor the attendance and effectiveness of their business and agricultural trainings. Moreover, without reliable data, the team had difficulty tracking the improvement of crop yields that were a result of the trainings.

The Approach The project, implemented by ACDI/VOCA, adopted locally sourced smartcard ID technology to register training participants and store and track data, ensuring more accurate monitoring and greater community engagement. Smallholder farmers receive smart ID cards with their photo, ID number and a chip that digitally captures and stores personal information and training participation. USAID and project officers compile this information into reports that show real-time results and enable more

effective programming. To date, ADVANCE II has successfully tracked over 120,000 people who participated in 5,111 training sessions and increased the number of trainings tailored to female farmers, a previously underrepresented population in trainings.

Why it Won Using smartcard technology, ADVANCE II's digital solution fits into existing programs without requiring its recipients to develop new digital skills. Harnessing the impact of this low-tech tool, the project benefits from more timely data tracking and use in the decision making process, especially how to engage users with more targeted training. Moreover, statistical analysis of data has allowed project officers to draw causal relationships between project training and farmer performance, demonstrating that farmers are applying the agronomic practices they are learning to improve crop yields.

FEED THE FUTURE UGANDA COMMODITY PRODUCTION AND MARKETING ACTIVITY

USAID/
Uganda

The Challenge

Without access to formal financial services or transparent market information, smallholder farmers in Uganda struggle to obtain high-quality inputs and agricultural financing. This limits their ability to improve productivity and weather economic shocks, and leaving them vulnerable to common risks like counterfeit inputs, pests and inclement weather. One big barrier to financial services is a lack of a credit or transaction history.

The Approach With support from Feed the Future Uganda's Commodity Production and Marketing Activity (CPM), ag-tech start up Akorion developed a digital platform for village agents to collect and aggregate information on a farms location, soil properties, agricultural production activities and transactions, creating a digital profile to help farmers gain access to financial products and services, such as input credit and crop insurance.

Village agents also use the platform to send farmers tailored information on agronomic techniques and best practices, market prices and weather forecasts.

Why it Won Akorion's technology-driven, market-based Ezy-Agric application offers a cost-effective way to rapidly collect, analyze and disseminate timely data to optimize farmers' operations, reduce transaction costs, link them to markets and ultimately help farmers access financial services based on data collected about their "bank-ability."

Since Ezy-Agric's 2014 pilot, CPM has exceeded most of its targets. The activity has profiled 130,253 farmers - allowing them to access more than \$59 million in loans for crop production, creating employment opportunities for over 700 youth as village agents, enrolling thousands of farmers in crop insurance and providing more than 400,000 farmers with access to market information.



Credit: USAID

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