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MOBILE APPS FOR CITIZENS SUPPORT IN INDIAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT - A STUDY OF 'DIRECT-TO-MOBILE' (D2M) SERVICE

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to study The Department of Telecommunications and India's public service broadcaster Prasarbharati has been working on a technology that will allow the broadcasting of video and other forms of multimedia content directly to mobile phones, without a need for an active internet connection. The technology is being called a 'Direct-to-Mobile' (D2M) service and it claims to improve the consumption of broadband and utilization of spectrum. Mobile application development is the set of processes and procedures involved in writing software for small, wireless computing devices, such as smartphones and other hand-held devices. Mobile apps are often written specifically to take advantage of the unique features of a particular mobile device. Mobile users benefit by obtaining timely information on a variety of subjects, including on rural development. The purpose of this paper is to illustrate the development and testing of an innovative mobile application.

Keywords: Mobile Apps, Rural Development, Electronic Media, Rural Usage, Innovation by Users.

Introduction

Technological interventions based on remote sensing, soil sensors, unmanned aerial surveying and market insights, etc., permit farmers to gather, visualise and assess crop and soil health conditions at different stages of production, in a convenient and cost-effective approach. They can act as an initial indicator to identify potential challenges and provide options to deal with them in a timely manner. India did not participate in the landline phone revolution but has seen an unprecedented growth in mobile phones, with over 919 million subscribers by the end of March 2012, making it second only to China in this sphere. The tele density in rural India, where nearly 69 percent of the total population lives, grew from below 1 percent in 2000 to around 40 percent in 2012. In these areas, people face several developmental constraints, such as low literacy, poor healthcare facilities, low per capita income, a high degree of poverty and problems related to poor infrastructure. Mobile phones can facilitate need-based and user-centric information and services at a cost that is affordable to India's rural population, which was hitherto unreachable.

Quick dissemination of information on results of research and development plans to aid rural population and to introduce new techniques into day-to-day farming is vital in any programme of rural development. The foremost requirement of development in any society is that people themselves must change. They must acquire new insights, outlook, skill, attitude and knowledge. Communication plays a very important role in informing, motivating and educating people about new ideas and practices. Communication, therefore, must be regarded as an essential input in rural development. It is now widely recognised that rural development may not be synonymous with agricultural development although agriculture is still the most important sector. Any programme of rural development must aim at raising the level of living of the rural masses and providing them opportunity to develop their potential. In practical terms it means helping them raise their farm productivity, tackling employment opportunities, securing adequate livelihood, providing more and better schooling, better health services, adequate housing facilities and raising the general level of income. It also includes meeting needs, material needs like the desire for self-determined, self-reliance, political freedom, security, sense of purpose in life and work. The fulfilment of these objectives requires mobilization of human resources in which communication plays a vital role.

Reaching Rural Population through Mobile Communication.

Use of modern mass communication media to impart new knowledge, change attitude, teach new skills and widen the horizon of rural masses is inevitable in a country of the size of India with fast size of rural population. Under Indian conditions, Mobile Communication is perhaps most suitable medium for achieving these

Mobile Apps for Citizens support in Rural Development

- GeoMGNREGA App
- Awaas+ App
- RHISS App
- Awaas App



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- eMARG Inspection App
- Mission Antyodaya App
- GeoRurban App
- Mela Sales App
- Mela Attendance App
- SAKSHAM App
- Extended Profile App
- Geo PMGSY App
- Area officer App
- Jan MNREGA App
- My road App
- Sambal App
- Kaushal Panjee – Skill Register App
- Georurban App
- Mission Antyodaya App
- GSA 18 App

GeoMGNREGA: The Mahatma Gandhi NREGA GIS Solution, named ‘GeoMGNREGA’ intends to provide a single and integrated view of asset information system across the rural India.

Awaas+: Awaas+ mobile application is an android based App which is exclusively made for the inspector to do the survey. The survey is for the people who were not covered in the SECC 2011

RHISS: This application is used by PLI. PLI will be able to verify the applicant’s eligibility for Housing Interest Subsidy Scheme (RHISS) basis preset eligibility criteria.

AwaasApp: A citizen centric mobile app to inspect and report the houses constructed under PMAYG or other rural housing schemes. App can also be used by designated PMAY house inspectors to inspect the houses constructed under PMAYG or other rural housing schemes which are monitored through AwaasSoft (Rural Housing e-gov solution of MoRD).

eMARG Inspection App: eMARG(electronic Maintenance of Rural Roads under PMGSY) application is an enterprise e-Governance solution for maintenance of roads under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna (PMGSY).

Mission Antyodaya: MoRD collect the village level data on infrastructure and economic activities using this ‘Mission Antyodaya’ android mobile App for ranking of the Gram panchayats and to create a baseline for monitoring the progress of the villages and GPs.

GeoRurban: A citizen centric mobile app to enable users to give feedback regarding pace of work/ activities, quality of work etc. under SPMRM to nodal officers at Central/ State.

Mela Sales App: It is being used to capture real-time sales of SHGs’ products during SARAS Mela and for generation of various other reports.

Mela Attendance App: It is being used to capture the real-time data of attendance of SHG Members and generation of various reports.

SAKSHAM: It is being used to capture financial literacy related training details of SHG members and impact of training.

Extended Profile App: An Extended profile mobile app has been developed to capture the information of Aadhaar via scanning of QR code present on Aadhaar Card and account details of SHG member along with some more features.

Geo PMGSY: “Geo PMGSY” mobile app enables the Programme Implementing Units to geo-tag the project sites sanctioned under the Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) scheme.

housing app: A citizen centric mobile app to inspect and report houses built under PMAY-G or other rural housing schemes.

Area officer: A comprehensive mechanism for real time monitoring and evidence based reporting of various programs of the Ministry of Rural Development

Jan MNREGA: A citizen centric mobile app that provides an interface to improve the quality of public services under MGNREGA.

My road: A citizen centric mobile app that enables users to give their feedback regarding the speed of PMGSY roads works, quality of work etc. to the nodal departments in State Governments / National Rural Roads Development Agency (NRRDA).

Sambal: National Social Assistance Program (NSAP)/Sambal is a welfare program administered by the Ministry of Rural Development. This program is being implemented in rural areas as well as in urban areas

Kaushal Panjee – Skill Register: A citizen centric mobile app for DDUGKY and RSETI where rural youth can register for free and stay connected with training partners and banks working in collaboration with Ministry of Rural Development.

Georurban: GeoRurban App has been developed with an objective to monitor the physical progress of works under SPMRM.



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Mission Antyodaya: Rural Development Ministry plans to collect village level data on infrastructure and economic activities using this 'Mission Antyodaya' Android mobile app.

GSA 18: A citizen centric mobile app specially designed for monitoring programs organized for rural areas during Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (14th April 2018 to 5th May 2018).

In history, All India Radio has been conscious, since its inception of the role radio can play in informing and educating the rural masses. In the last few years, AIR has made considerable progress in the area of development broadcasting. The establishment of special Farm & Home units in 1966 at 10 selected AIR stations marked the beginning of new era in rural broadcasting. Encouraged by the achievements of the first 10 units, more units were set up in subsequent years and at present there are 49 Farm & Home units providing specialized information support to agricultural and rural development programmes.

Informative Messages

The Informative messages in Mobile Communication, explain to the audience what is happening in his environment. This is the message that tells a rural population about the weather conditions, market trends, the events and happenings that directly or indirectly affect their operation and the Government policies and programmes. It includes Mobile Apps as well. The Mobile Apps contains news of the day which is of interest to the farming community such as crop diseases, pests, new farm techniques, release of new varieties, field demonstrations, farmers fairs, Government policies regarding agricultural inputs, land reform measures, new projects and programmes and the activities of the rural development agencies. No occupation depends as much on the weather conditions as agriculture. Therefore, the need for reporting weather report daily cannot be over-emphasised. The weather reports include timely and detailed weather forecast tailored to current farming occupation, effects about the weather conditions and the weather forecast.

The Educative Messages

The educative messages are the back-bone of the rural development programmes, for their function is to teach how to do. Educational messages help the audiences understand, interpret and use of facts. The emergency of new agriculture has brought about a great deal of sophistication to farmers operations. The farmers must deal with new varieties of seeds; fertilizer, its proper application; irrigation techniques; plant protection measures; soil and water management; market trends and a host of other subjects. The Farm & Home programmes have been providing educational messages on various farm operations linked with the day-to-day problems of the farmers. Topics on agriculture, animal husbandry, horticulture fisheries, forestry, sericulture, poultry, nutrition, child-care, health, family welfare, co-operation, rural industries and various other problems of rural life are included in the daily programme.

Information Support to Specialized Rural Development Agencies

Majority of the families in the country have small size holdings. There are a number of marginal farmers and agricultural labourers. Therefore, special programmes are put out in support of programmes sponsored by Small Farmers Development Agency and Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Agency. A large number of rural development schemes such as High Yielding Varieties, Programme, National Demonstration Scheme, Drought-prone Area Project, Intensive Cattle Development Scheme, Farmers Training Programme, Farmers Literacy Programme, Applied Nutrition Programme, Integrated Rural Development Programme and Integrated Child-care Scheme have been introduced in recent years.

Conclusion

Mobile applications for rural development offer an innovative, dynamic, interdisciplinary services. These new services could raise incomes and create more opportunities for people in rural and underserved communities in India as well as stakeholders throughout the rural demography of India. Mobile Apps for Citizens support in Indian Rural Development by 'Direct-to-Mobile' (D2M) service apps are developing rapidly, the observations in this report provide only a snapshot of this field's evolution and in the case, studies should show policymakers and development practitioners how great a potential role that apps could play in development. Most apps focus on improving rural integration and have a wide range of functions, such as providing information, increasing access to extension services, and facilitating market links. Users are also diverse, including farmers, produce buyers, cooperatives, input suppliers, content providers, and other stakeholders who demand useful and affordable services. These Apps integration applications could provide significant economic and social benefits. The potential development impact of apps mainly lies in their ability to provide access to useful, relevant information and services.



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