

Airtel Cares launched to boost Agriculture, Health and Education Sectors in Uganda

- Airtel announces partnership with EzyAgric to enhance Agric-Business in Uganda
- Farmers to access agronomy tips using Airtel USSD or IVR or SMS for feature phones and the EzyAgric app for Smartphone users

Luwero 24 January 2022: Airtel Uganda The Smartphone Network with the widest 4G coverage in Uganda has today launched *Airtel Cares*, an initiative that is dedicated to supporting communities, through digitizing Agriculture, Health and Education. The announcement was made today during the unveiling of a partnership between Airtel and EzyAgric that is intended to boost Agri-Business in Uganda.

Airtel's partnership with EzyAgric, an Agric-Tech company, will support farmers in embracing the use of technology through mobile phones to have access to useful information on agricultural inputs, market access, insurance options, marketing and weather information among other elements that will decision making.

While addressing the media, Mr. Henry Njoroge, the Marketing Director at Airtel Uganda said, "Airtel Cares, is an integral part of our business under our sustainability strategy in which we are committed to supporting the reduction of barriers to social and economic empowerment of communities in which we operate".

"We shall be making continuous investment in affordable and innovative products, solutions and partnerships in the areas of Agriculture, Education and Health. Today we are proud to be launching this service that allows farmers with feature phones to also access agricultural information to improve their decision making and productivity".

“Airtel Uganda remains committed to championing the growth of Uganda’s transformative sectors and we are happy to have more partners like EzyAgric who have committed to serve in this space.”

He added that, “In partnership with EzyAgric, *Airtel Cares* has designed customized agronomy messages that will be accessed by farmers who opt to use the versatile EzyAgric App.

The feature phone users will access the information through a USSD/IVR and SMS notifications, while Smartphone users will be able to download the EzyAgric farmer Application on their phone.”

According to the 2018 Annual Agriculture Survey report by Food Agricultural Organization and Uganda Bureau of Statistics the agricultural sector employs over 80% of the rural population and about 64.3% of the working population.

“For many years, farmers have suffered losses because of lack of alignment of information on when to plant, what to plant, where to buy inputs, and at what price. They have also lacked information on how to control pests and diseases, where to sell their products and at what price. We are confident that this partnership will go a long way in bridging this gap” said M/s Josephine Okot, Founder and CEO Victoria Seeds Ltd who was the chief guest.

“With over 70% of the population being employed in the Agricultural sector, it is without a doubt that agriculture continues to be among the key drivers of Uganda’s economic growth. I urge Ugandans to use this service and ensure that we continue to have food on our tables” Josephine concluded.

Welcoming the partnership, Mr. William Luyinda, the Chief Executive Officer EzyAgric said, “Technology continues to be instrumental in improving agri-business in Uganda, and with almost everything being digitalized, it then becomes a worthwhile investment to venture into such partnership like what we have with Airtel Uganda. The farmers will have access to advice from a range of resources that are available through our long list of extension workers within several districts who can speak English, Lugbara, Lumasaba, Runyakitara and Luganda among the other language translations available on the EzyAgric App.”

Farmers will have access to information such as; The farm/garden mapping, Agric shop, Ezy credits, Farm manager, produce market, Better extension which includes; crop nutrition, diary, news, videos, Financial literacy, Advisory topics for at least 15 crops in horticulture for; cereals, pulses, oilseeds and perennial crops, Plant protection (tips on disease management & control), Seed selection management, Post-harvest handling, Weather information, among others.

All content viewed on the App will be zero rated to a cap of 500Mbs per user, per month, thereafter, the farmer will pay for the extra Mbs while accessing information on the app. The data cannot be shared (Gifting, Tugabane and Data Me2U). All subscriptions will be handled by the USSD opt in that requests and registers the user to create the farmer's profile.

Notes to the editor

Airtel will pilot this project for 6 months. The free access of 500MB valid for 30days partnership is valid for an initial 6 months' pilot period. The period will be counted from start of the offer. For all consequent monthly usage beyond the 500mbs of the App, users will pay for their data usage.

For feature phone users, they will opt in the service for through the USSD code *163#.

ABOUT BHARTI AIRTEL LIMITED

Airtel Africa Limited is a Pan-African telecommunications company with operations in 14 countries across Africa. Airtel Africa is driven by the vision of providing affordable and innovative mobile services to all and is supported in pursuing this vision by its largest shareholder, Bharti Airtel. Its product offerings include 2G, 3G and 4G wireless voice and data services and mobile commerce through 'Airtel Money'. Airtel Africa had over 97 million customers across its operations at the end of December 2018.

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