

# John's Chicken Cure

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As chairman of his village, John is looked at for answers. Now, he can give them.

John lives in Lousewa, a small rural village in Myanzi district, Central Uganda. John has been participating in an Azuri trial in Uganda to investigate the potential impact of using smartphones in agriculture. John's harvest includes coffee, bananas, maize and tomatoes – so long as he can keep them from being eaten by his 35 cattle. Following a devastating fire in which John nearly lost his entire home and a young son, he and his wife registered for the trial as soon as it was announced.

**“People come to me as a leader, asking questions and expecting answers. Every time I don't have an answer, I feel I am letting them down”**

John struggled to lead his agricultural and farming community with nothing but a basic mobile phone. Farmers would come with a real desire to learn more and more about their work, but if John didn't have the answer from personal experience the farmer would have to wait a week until John could meet with a sector leader to find out more. When he heard about the Azuri smartphone trial, John made sure he was first on the register.

John and his family have 13 chickens, and use the income from their eggs and chicks to supplement their agriculture in the off seasons. Exploring his smartphone, John watched a preloaded video about chicken rearing. As well as covering the basics, the video showed a chicken being given a local plant as medicine when it was sick. “I grow this plant, but never knew it could be used” he said. Not wanting to take the risk, John searched the internet for reviews of the plant and to see whether it could be true: “I read about other farmers using it and they all said it was good – one from Kenya said he even uses it for chicks”. After researching the results, John decided to try the medicine with a chick which was unwell.

**“I watched the video again and soaked the plant like the Kenyan farmer did. I fed the leaves to the chick and within 2 days she was healthy again! I have cleared a section of the garden now just for this plant”**

Now when a chicken gets sick, John and his family do not face a dent in their income: they can keep their coop healthy and strong, keeping their income reliable and growing from not losing chicks to illness. Moreover, John hopes to make his whole village more connected, as people come to him regularly with questions about their livestock and crops.



**“I told one farmer about the chicken medicine, and the next day 3 came asking about maize pests – we sat and searched the internet, looked at results and decided to try a product which had worked in Rwanda”**

1 week later, John checked in with the maize farmers who reported the product had been a success – the pests were gone and now the farmers kept the income from the maize they previously would have to throw away for waste. John also takes photos of sick animals to take to the local vet to help the diagnosis and ensure the right medicine is given – before, he says, it was a guessing game based on loose descriptions – “I can help people more – it’s my job, and now I can do it better than before where we’d wait for a week for an answer”.



**“I am respected. I have access to all the knowledge in the world and I can share it with my community. I am a big man.”**