

GENIUS!

ONE WOMAN,
ONE BRILLIANT IDEA



SAUMYA

SEEDING CHANGE

HER INSPIRATION:

Climate change has hit farmers in India hard, with rising temperatures leading to droughts and spoiled crops, impacting the livelihood of the 60 percent of rural households that rely on agriculture. "They have no control of their incomes,"

Saumya, 30, says of farmers in her native country. "No matter how much they toil in the fields, because of climate change, they never know what they may earn."

HER BIG IDEA:

In 2015, she cofounded Kheyti (which means "farming" in Hindi) with colleagues from a previous startup. "Our mission is to help small farmers become more climate-resilient," says

Saumya, who is based in Hyderabad. They quickly homed in on a solution: greenhouses, though most existing models were for larger farms. Enter Kheyti's greenhouse-in-a-box, a low-cost modular structure that protects crops from wind, rain, heat, and pests.

THE RESULTS:

Kheyti doesn't install the technology and leave; it trains farmers and helps them market their crops. It also equips the greenhouses with drip-irrigation systems so water shortages are less of an issue. Kheyti is testing with 300 farmers near Telangana in south India who are able to grow seven times more food using 90 percent less water. By 2025, Sahay says, they hope to have served 70,000 farmers.

—Jennifer Chowdhury



MEXICO

Dream Team

Against all odds, Mexico's women's national ice-hockey team is skating toward Olympic glory

ABOVE: Mexico's women's national ice-hockey team facing off against a local men's team in Mexico City, November 2018. BELOW: Goalkeeper Mónica Evangelina Rentería Peñafort and her teammates after a training session in Metepec, Mexico, March 2019.

When Macarena Cruz Ceballos turned 15, she was told she could no longer compete in ice hockey because there was no team in Mexico for girls her age. Determined to continue in the sport she had loved for two years as a novice, she worked with the president of the Mexico Ice Hockey Federation to create a team for women. When she held the first team meeting in 2012, "60 girls turned up," says Cruz Ceballos, now 24. "There were so many who wanted to play." Eight years later, 19 members of Mexico's women's national ice-hockey team will face Taiwan, Latvia, Spain, the U.K., and North Korea in the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) Women's World Championship, in Jaca, Spain, this month.

In 2016, the women, now ages 17 to 35, made it to the second round of the Olympic qualifiers, a feat the men's team has not achieved. They are determined to go further next time by becoming the first ice-hockey team from Latin America at the Winter Olympics, in Beijing in 2022.

But there are a number of roadblocks. Mexico is ranked 26 out of 39 teams, which makes the Olympics feel like a far-off dream. One way to move up is to practice more, but there are only 10 ice rinks in Mexico. Just half of Mexico's rinks meet the parameters set by IIHF, and they are expensive to rent. When the team plays abroad, it hears, "There are ice rinks in Mexico?" says Frida Cárdenas Castro, a 22-year-old forward, laughing.

Money is another concern. The team's funds were reduced by Mexico's National Commission for Physical Culture and Sport, so it now has to self-finance much of its training, with a lot of the burden falling on the players' families. "Honestly, the backbone of the team has been our parents," Cruz Ceballos says. To go to Scotland for the IIHF Women's World Championship for the team's division last year, each player had to fork out 20,000 pesos (around \$1,000), a hefty price tag considering the average annual income in Mexico hovers around 130,000 pesos (roughly \$7,000).

But no matter what happens in 2022, the team has already made a lasting impact. "People can't imagine the progress they have made," says Hayley Wickenheiser, the former Canadian ice-hockey player widely considered one of the best women in the sport. "They're leaders now for the next generation of young girls who want to play hockey in Mexico." And that matters even more than medals. —Bérengère Sim

