Helping Marginalized Communities Access Healthcare through Mobile Phones

Mobile telecommunications continues to provide critical contribution to Kenya’s socioeconomic development. The industry’s unprecedented and rapid expansion has created opportunities for the health care players to expand their services to unreach ed and underserved populations.

To establish the extent to which mobile money platforms are providing a means to scale up inclusive business models and access to health care, especially among low income Kenyans, the Business Call to Action (BCtA), a global advocacy platform hosted by UNDP, commissioned a report titled ‘Advancing Bottom of pyramid Access to healthcare – A case study on Mobile Money Platforms.’

It established that, while most of people at the Bottom of the Pyramid (who earn less than USD8.4 (ksh.800) per day) have mobile phones, low and unpredictable incomes made it difficult for them to save for healthcare. However through the efforts of Inclusive Business models which aim to include the poor in their value chains, there has been an emergence of a wide spectrum of services ranging from payment for health

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care, health voucher systems, mobile money based savings and insurance products.

Affordable healthcare is critical for attaining the national development blueprint, Vision 2030 in addition to ensuring that we realize the recently launched Sustainable Development Goals. But to achieve this the private sector is a critical player. Speaking during the launch of the report in Nairobi, the UNDP Country Director, Ms. Maria-Threase Keating said “These businesses are inspiring us with their work and aspiration to improve people's quality of life and to seek solutions that contribute to the achievement of key development goals such as access to affordable health care.”

Among the Participating companies include MicroEnsure, Jacaranda Health and Changamka MicroHealth Ltd all of whom have joined the Business Call to Action platform, that supports private sector's contribution to development, and have made measurable commitments to contribute to sustainable development through inclusive business models.

The Deputy Head of DFID, Tony Gadner called for more innovative technological ideas that offer solutions to emerging development challenges. “Mhealth offers significant potential positively change the lives of people and with good health you have a great work force” he said.

The Ministry of Health is already up to the challenge and says that MHealth is one of the pillars in Kenya's e-health strategy. “The Ministry of Health is keen to ensure an enabling regulatory environment to encourage innovation and use of mobile technology in improving the health of Kenyans. The other pillars are telemedicine, health information system, e-learning and information for citizens,” said Dr Izak Odongo from the Ministry of health.

People at the Bottom of the Pyramid are more vulnerable to the impoverishing consequences of ill health than the wealthier quintiles. Households without insurance coverage are often forced to pay substantial out-of-pocket medical bills. These payments lower their living standards and may even push them in to poverty.

One of the successful products that was able to net more people into health insurance was Changamka, which in 2015, it had over 22,000 policyholders and insured over 65,000 individuals. Here, members could make small insurance payments using their mobile phones through Safaricom’s M-Pesa platform, and remitted to the British American Insurance Kenya Limited (Britam) as the underwriter. The insurance also insured members with daily cash payments of Ksh. 500 (US$5.6) after the third day of hospitalization for lost income.

Businesses also get to benefit through reduced revenue leakages, and more efficient data collection for decision-making. This data can provide useful insights into patient profiles, spending behaviors, common diagnoses and medications, allowing healthcare providers and payers to make data-driven decisions about their businesses.

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**East African academicians and professional bodies heads discuss urban planning**

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eas, senior lecturers of architecture schools and chairs of professional bodies of East Africa recently met in Machakos to discuss education for sustainability in architecture and urban planning. The meeting organized by UN-Habitat saw teaching staff of different schools of architecture and built environment meet to deliberate on the topic “integration of sustainable building design into curriculum for higher learning in East Africa.” The workshop brought together some 25 participants from 18 universities to discuss on the best ways to embrace the green buildings concept in higher learning institutions.

Prof. Jacob Kaimenyi, Kenya’s Cabinet Secretary for Land, Housing and Urban Development officially opened the two day workshop. He applauded UN-Habitat for its efforts towards sustainable built environment. “The push for a green future could be won or lost in technical
institutions of higher learning. The future professionals need to be prepared for an inevitable future that is faced with challenges of climate change and scarce resources.”

Mr. Andre Dzikus, from UN-Habitat thanked partners; UNEP, GEF and the five East African countries for the program “Promoting energy efficiency in buildings in East Africa.”

“Majority of buildings in Sub-Saharan Africa are replicas of buildings designed for the western world with cold temperate climates. There is need for architects to consider the local environment like climate and material, the local economy, culture and customs of a particular region before designing and constructing buildings.”

UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the Teachers’ Service Commission (TSC) together with other key stakeholders in education in Kenya organized a training workshop to address Gender Based Violence (GBV) in schools for County Teacher Management Directors, from 28th February to 2nd March 2016.

The aim of the project is to build the capacity of key education personnel in prevention and response to cases of GBV in schools and wider education sector. The workshop was a follow-up to a two-day workshop with the same theme for the County Directors of Education, from 14th -17th February 2016.

During the workshop, a Rapid Situational Analysis on Gender Based Violence was presented to identify needs and inform a training manual on GBV for the education sector. Mr. Simon Kavisi, the TSC Deputy Commission Secretary, highlighted the need for an integrated child protection strategy. The trainings provided an opportunity to take stock on measures to address GBV in schools and methods that enable the County Directors of Education and the County Teacher Management Directors to contribute.

Priority follow-up actions were identified, such as a multi-sectorial approach to effectively and efficiently address GBV in the education sector and concerted efforts to increase awareness of the teachers, students as well as community members. The importance of partnership was also emphasized during the workshop.

37 County Directors and 47 County Teacher Management Directors attended the workshops. The trainings are part of the project entitled “Addressing Gender Based Violence in Schools in Kenya” funded by the Government of Greece.
Starting with Mindsets to Reform the Kenyan Police

Inspector General Boinnet and Mr Jose Vila del Castillo, UNODC Regional Representative, express shared appreciation for efforts to reform policing services in Kenya, at a meeting on 17 March 2016. (Photo by UNODC)

This training has ‘inspired me to discover the potential I didn’t know I possess’, remarked one of the police’s reform champions at the end of a recent UNODC training. On 21-24 March, UNODC consultant George Pransky pioneered an innovative and high impact approach to organizational change with Kenya’s National Police Service (NPS).

Pransky, co-founder of the fastest growing approach in the human relations field, the ‘Three Principles’, says this is the first time these methods have been applied to organizational change in a like-for-like context.

The NPS Director of Reforms, John Ochieng, heralded this approach as ‘the key to transforming Kenyan policing services for the 21st-century’. Police trainees received tools enabling them to overcome resistance to change. Borrowing on Pransky’s expertise, the police were able to understand why some officers may feel entrenched, and how the champions’ state of mind is the most powerful tool they have in overcoming entrenched resistance. Pransky later remarked that ‘I taught that goodwill is everybody’s essential nature and that offering it to even the most resistant people will draw out the goodwill in them.’

The initiative is integral to the NPS Reforms Roadmap, supported by UNODC, which rolls out strategies and procedures to reform the police at the station level. Before the strategies and procedures have a chance of taking root, the NPS requests that the mindsets of the officers – the soil in which the strategies will be planted – need to be addressed.

Pransky expounds on this theory: ‘Hearts and minds are like the software that makes the change possible. Structural and procedural changes are like the hardware. If the human part of the equation isn’t there then there is no chance for success. I will boldly say that ninety percent of all unsuccessful reorganizations and attempted cultural changes fail solely because the employees’ human qualities were compromised.’

All of the police’s reform champions will soon embark on deeper training in this approach to organizational change, and UNODC’s Police Reforms Programme will profile this work at the up-coming One Solution Event, www.onesolutionevent.com, in Oslo, Norway, on 27-29 May 2016.

Improving School Grades with Solar Lighting

Reading is the major activity that occupies the larger part of a student’s program. In addition to what is taught in class, those children who end up performing well in national examinations attribute their success to among other routines, putting in extra study hours during the night. But for the children of Isiolo and Samburu counties, when night falls, reading stops.

Many of the school going children in Isiolo and Samburu rely on kerosene lamps or even reading over the fire. In addition to the fact that these are not adequate light sources for studying, they also expose the children to health hazards including respiratory diseases and eyesight challenges.

A clean energy source of light for studying is a vital component in ensuring equal rights to education for these children. It is for this reason that UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources & Regional Development Authorities, developed the Solar Lantern Project for Northern Kenya. The project which is in support of the Access to Clean Energy Programme of the Ministry of Energy & Petroleum has helped to mitigate the
challenge of electricity inaccessibility for school going children and health facilities in Isiolo and Samburu Counties. More than 2000 units have been distributed to 26 schools and 10 health facilities and in less than a year, there is a notable improvement in schools. Amina Abdi, a student at Bulampya School is a beneficiary of the lanterns. She recounts her experience before and after she received the solar lamp. “Although the lamp was given to me it helps my whole family. Before, my 5 siblings and I would all gather around the kerosene lamp or a candle to do our assignments. We could barely see. But now, we simply place the lantern at a central point and with the maximum light settings, we are all able to see without any struggle. I have also gone a grade up in school, from the extra study hours I put in at night using my solar lamp.”

When using low light, the lanterns last up to 15 hours, when the settings are on medium, they can be used for a maximum of 9 hours. When using maximum light, the lanterns can last up to 6 hours, the same number of hours it takes to have them fully charged when they are facing the sun. The lifespan of the lamps is approximated at 10 years if in urban areas and 5 years for rural areas.

An entity of the Ministry of Environment, Ewaso Ng’iro North Development Authority (ENNDA), with head teachers from the selected schools are managing the initiative originally initiated by the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD). The distribution of the lanterns also bolsters UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s Sustainable Energy for All initiative and is in line with Sustainable Development Goal number 7; Ensuring Access to Affordable, Reliable, Sustainable and Modern Energy for All. The lamps are a donation from Panasonic Corporation.
**Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss**

- Thirteen million hectares of forests are being lost every year.
- Around 1.6 billion people depend on forests for their livelihood. This includes some 70 million indigenous people. Forests are home to more than 80% of all terrestrial species of animals, plants and insects.
- 2.6 billion people depend directly on agriculture, but 52% of the land used for agriculture is moderately or severely affected by soil degradation.
- Due to drought and desertification each year, 12 million hectares are lost (23 hectares per minute), where 20 million tons of grain could have been grown.
- Of the 8,300 animal breeds known, 8% are extinct and 22% are at risk of extinction.
- As many as 80% of people living in rural areas in developing countries rely on traditional plant-based medicines for basic healthcare.

**Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels**

- The number of refugees of concern to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) stood at 13 million in mid-2014, up from a year earlier.
- Corruption, bribery, theft and tax evasion cost some US $1.26 trillion for developing countries per year.
- The rate of children leaving primary school in conflict-affected countries reached 50% in 2011, which amounts to 28.5 million children.
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5. Keeps peace with peacekeepers in more than 12 operations on 4 continents
6. Fights poverty, helping millions of rural poor achieve better lives
7. Protects and promotes human rights on site and through some 80 treaties/declarations
8. Mobilizes US$ billions in humanitarian aid to help people affected by emergencies
9. Advances democracy, assisting many countries a year with their elections
10. Promotes maternal health, saving the lives of millions of women a year

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This Newsletter is compiled by the UN Communications Group in Kenya (UNCG) designed and edited by the United Nations Information Centre, Nairobi.

For more information contact: UNCG Chair,
P. O. Box 67578-00100 Nairobi, Kenya.
Tel: 020-76221102, E-mail: nairobi.unic@unon.org

United Nations Information Centre Nairobi @unicnairobi