



“The quickest way to get rid of poverty right now is to have a mobile telephone.” – *Muhammad Yunus, Grameen Bank Founder, Nobel Laureate and United Nations Foundation Board Member*

“Creative use of modern wireless telecommunications has the power to transform health delivery in the developing world.” – *Timothy E. Wirth, United Nations Foundation President*

The Opportunity

Health challenges facing tens of millions present arguably the most significant barrier to global economic development. For example, each year 500,000 women die in childbirth, and 4 million babies die before they are 30 days old. Millions more die from diseases, like malaria, that no longer exist in the developed world. Health expertise is stretched far too thin. Yet there is a new opportunity. Mobile health, or mHealth, can be a critical “force multiplier” for creating healthier communities by empowering individuals and equipping decision makers with the information to make informed decisions about critical health issues. There are close to 5 billion mobile subscribers worldwide, close to two-thirds of which are in emerging economies. Cell phones are being used in villages without electricity.

Launched at the GSM Mobile World Congress in 2009, the mHealth Alliance was created to help deliver quality health care at the furthest reaches of wireless networks. Innovation in wireless is revolutionizing health delivery models, make it easier to reduce childhood mortality, increase maternal health, and combat diseases such as HIV/AIDS and malaria.

The mHealth Alliance

Sustainable mHealth efforts require effective public/private partnerships, supporting in-country leadership with technology, best practices, start up funding and other elements. The Rockefeller Foundation, United Nations Foundation and The Vodafone Foundation launched the mHealth Alliance for this purpose. The U.S. President’s Emergency Fund for AIDs Relief (PEPFAR) and the GSM Association also have joined the Alliance as founding partners. The Alliance fills a role as a global catalyst for driving mHealth to sustainable scale, unlocking the greatest possible benefit for public health in developing countries. Initial activities focus on:

- Bringing thought leadership to bear on the key barriers to mHealth
- Building a virtual global community of likeminded groups through an mHealth “public square”
- Defining global enterprise requirements and technology architecture, developing foundational applications, refining the health values, and finding sustainable business models
- In country deployments to show the improved health outcomes & value chains of data integration

Building from Experience

The founding partners of the mHealth Alliance share deep experience in global health, development and innovative technology. For example, they developed and tested award winning mhealth technology in 20 countries across sub-Saharan Africa. This was part of the United Nations Foundation and Vodafone Foundation Technology Partnership’s \$30 million, five year commitment working with United Nations agencies and NGOs to bring the latest technology solutions to UN field work.

www.mHealthAlliance.org

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