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MOBILE SOLUTIONS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND RESEARCH (mSTAR), BANGLADESH

WORKSHOP ON *Mobile Money Impact: Experiences from the Field*

May 12, 2015; FHI 360 Bangladesh Country Office

**WORKSHOP REPORT
MAY 2015**



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DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Agency for International Development or the U.S. Government.

I. Introduction

USAID's mSTAR project aims to increase operational efficiency and productivity across USAID Bangladesh's agricultural and health portfolios through mobile and electronic payment adoption. Aligned with this objective, mSTAR Bangladesh facilitates quarterly and district-level technical workshops to increase awareness and competence of relevant USAID implementing partners (IPs) on the benefits of using mobile payments.

I.1 mSTAR Workshop Series

The quarterly workshops are designed to increase awareness and educate USAID/Bangladesh IPs working in the health and agriculture sectors on mobile money usage. The workshop series educates finance and programmatic staff on the benefits of using mobile money. Discussion among different IPs in the workshop also increases their reflective knowledge on mobile banking and mobile money.

I.2 Sixth Quarterly Workshop: Mobile Money Impact: Experiences from the field

The sixth quarterly workshop focused on sharing real experiences of USAID implementing partners using mobile money in their project operations. mSTAR grantees, USAID's Mobile Alliance for Maternal Action (MAMA) project implemented by Dnet and USAID's Aquaculture for Income and Nutrition (AIN) project implemented by WorldFish shared their experience of using mobile money in their respective projects. mSTAR grantees shared the challenges faced during the transition and the benefits they have received. The workshop also discussed the Mobile Financial Services in Bangladesh report, a recent publication from mSTAR/Bangladesh that describes the state of mobile financial services in Bangladesh, including an overview of the services available, relevant regulations, and the extent to which staff and beneficiaries from select USAID agriculture and health projects are using those services.

2. Basic Information on the Workshop

Title of the Workshop: *Mobile Money Impact: Experiences from the Field*

Date and Time: May 12, 2015; 9:30 AM – 12:30PM

Venue: Conference Room; FHI 360, Bangladesh Country Office

3. Workshop Participant Details

A total of 25 participants from 9 organizations participated in the workshop.

Total Number of Participants: 25

- Male: 20
- Female: 05

Number of Organizations Participating: 9

Organizations Participating:

1. ACDI/VOCA
2. Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI)
3. Helen Keller International
4. Care Bangladesh
5. WorldFish
6. International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC)
7. Dnet
8. Winrock International
9. USAID Bangladesh

Details of the participants is provided in Annex – I

4. Workshop Program Schedule

TIME	DESCRIPTION/DETAIL	RESOURCE PERSON
09:30	Registration and Pre-assessment	Shamsin Ahmed, Mobile Money Associate, mSTAR Bangladesh
09:40	Welcome and Introduction	Josh Woodard, Regional ICT & Digital Finance Specialist; FHI 360, Asia/Pacific
09:45	Welcome note from USAID	Jeff de Graffenried, Project Development Officer; USAID Bangladesh
10:00	Mobile Money and its Impact: Experiences from mSTAR Grantees	Hendrik Jan Keus, Chief of Party, USAID's AIN project; WorldFish Md. Forhad Uddin, Chief of Impact; Dnet
11:00	Tea Break	
11:15	Overview of the main findings of the mSTAR's report on Mobile Financial Services in Bangladesh: A Survey of Current Services, Regulations, and Usage in Select USAID	Jaheed Parvez, Mobile Money Specialist, mSTAR Bangladesh Md. Ariful Islam, M&E Specialist, mSTAR

	Projects	Bangladesh
11:45	Discussion: How to address challenges/gaps to increased mobile money uptake?	Jaheed Parvez
12:20	Post-assessment	Md. Ariful Islam
12:30	Closing Remarks	Ataur Rahman, Team Lead mSTAR Bangladesh

5. Overview of Major Activities

The workshop opened up platform for mSTAR grantees, Dnet and WorldFish to share their experience on using mobile money in project operations. The sharing of experiences enabled space for cross learning among USAID IPs. The workshop also discussed the Mobile Financial Services in Bangladesh report, a recent publication from mSTAR/Bangladesh that describes the state of mobile financial services in Bangladesh, including an overview of the services available, relevant regulations, and the extent to which staff and beneficiaries from select USAID agriculture and health projects are using those services. The workshop sessions were moderated by M. Ataur Rahman, team lead of mSTAR Bangladesh.

5.1 Welcome Note

Josh Woodard, Regional ICT & Digital Finance Specialist of mSTAR, welcomed all participants for attending the workshop. He mentioned that mobile money in Bangladesh is gaining popularity and has high potential. He gave a brief overview of the mSTAR/Bangladesh published MFS in Bangladesh report and mentioned that it will benefit the USAID implementing partners to learn more about mobile money.



Mr. Woodard mentioned that USAID’s mSTAR project is helping USAID’s health and agriculture projects to adopt mobile money in their project operations. He shared that mSTAR conducts workshops both at Dhaka and district level to increase awareness among USAID IP staff and beneficiaries. mSTAR also produced many learning documents aimed at helping USAID IPs to learn more about mobile money. In addition, mSTAR also provides technical assistance to USAID health and agriculture implementing partners in adopting mobile money in their project operations.

Jeff de Graffenried, Project Development Officer at USAID/Bangladesh, welcomed all participants for



attending the workshop. Mentioning about the high participant turnout, he said that everybody's input makes the initiative fruitful. He shared that USAID sees mSTAR as an interesting and innovative project and said that mSTAR project has the technical competency to help USAID implementing partners in transitioning from cash to electronic or mobile payments.

5.2 Mobile Money and its Impact: Experiences from mSTAR Grantees

Hendrik Jan Keus, chief of party of USAID's Aquaculture for Income and Nutrition (AIN) project implemented by WorldFish presented WorldFish's experience on using mobile money in the project operations. He mentioned

that providing technical training to rural farmers is a core component of their intervention. He shared that earlier the whole process involved cash but now with mSTAR's technical assistance and grant they have pilot



tested mobile payments in their incentive disbursement system. He mentioned that after adopting mobile payments they have substantially being able to save time, disbursement cost and human resource time. He further mentioned that now with the saved time, frontline staff are able to monitor and ensure the quality of the trainings. Mr. Keus shared that initially they thought they will be able to reach to the end farmers but inaccessibility to mobile phone added with low literacy level among farmers and absence of required documents to open mobile money accounts were the challenges they needed to overcome. He expressed the need of a mobile money ecosystem which would enable users to use mobile money beyond cash out. In response to a question, Mr. Keus mentioned that receiving incentive over mobile money does not increase cost to beneficiaries considering the saved travel time and travel cost.

Md. Forhad Uddin, Chief of Impact of USAID's MAMA initiative implemented by Dnet presented the experience of Dnet on using mobile money. He asserted that the popularity of mobile money is gaining popularity in Bangladesh. Thanking mSTAR for providing technical assistance in adopting mobile payments, Mr. Forhad mentioned that they are using mobile payments through bKash and DBBL mobile banking to disburse incentives to their frontline health agents. He shared that after adopting mobile payments their disbursement cycle has been reduced from 30 days to 8 days, which has benefitted both the frontline staff and beneficiaries. He mentioned that under mSTAR grant, Dnet has developed a gateway software named Payble which eases making bulk payments through bKash and DBBL mobile banking.

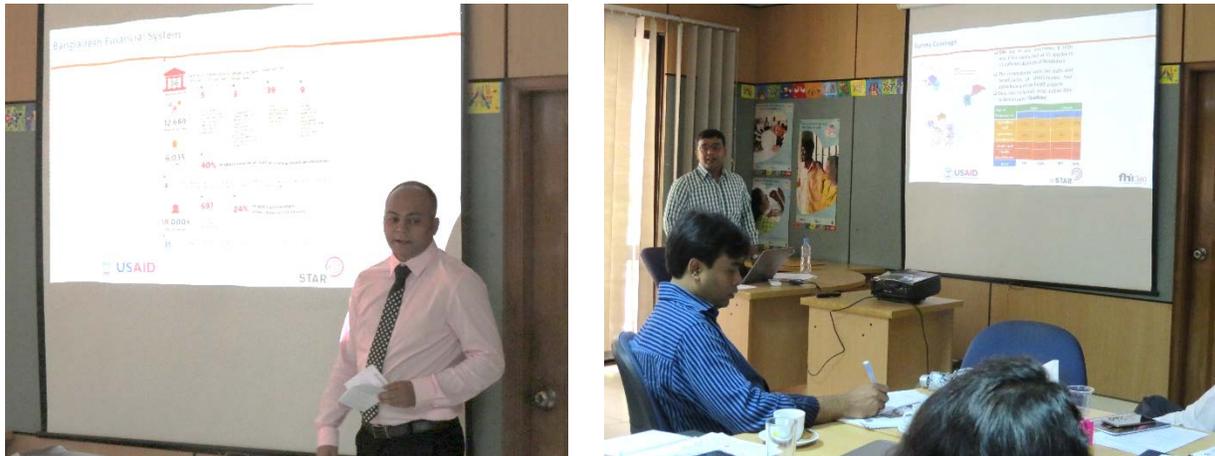


5.3 Overview of the main findings of the mSTAR's report on Mobile Financial Services in Bangladesh

mSTAR's Mobile Money Specialist, Jaheed Parvez and mSTAR's M&E Specialist, Md. Ariful Islam shared some key highlights from the recently mSTAR/Bangladesh published [MFS in Bangladesh Report](#), which focuses on the state of mobile financial services (MFS) in Bangladesh, including an overview of the services available, relevant regulations, and the extent to which staff and beneficiaries from select USAID agriculture and health projects are using those services.

Mr. Parvez shared that the mobile financial service (MFS) industry in Bangladesh follows a bank-led model with 28 banks allowed to offer MFS products out of which only 10 banks are actively delivering the services at the frontline. He mentioned that compared with the access points offered by formal banks, access points offered by MFS provider is much higher. He shared that initially MFS products were primarily limited domestic fund transfers; however, over time and with increased competition, MFS providers are beginning to offer more innovated products. Mr. Parvez also mentioned that increased competition is inducing MFS providers to lower their service charges. He shared that the MFS industry in Bangladesh is governed by Bangladesh Bank's MFS policy and therefore the users' rights are protected.

Mr. Islam shared that 244 USAID health and agriculture project staff and 660 beneficiaries were interviewed during the survey. The survey found that all staff interviewed owned mobile phones, but that many beneficiaries, who are primarily housewives and rural farmers, do not. Mr. Islam noted that the beneficiaries perceive the service charges as very high.



5.4 Open Discussion

In an open discussion, the mSTAR team responded to several questions and concerns raised by the participants. In response to a concern regarding retrieving a lost PIN code, mSTAR's mobile money specialist Jaheed Parvez mentioned that the user can call the MFS provider's customer care center and follow a basic procedure to retrieve his/her PIN code or reset a new PIN code. In response to another question on audits, Mr. Parvez mentioned that the MFS provider shares a detailed disbursement statement after making a bulk disbursement. The organization can use that statement for audit purpose furthers. He went on to say that USAID actually prefers disbursing funds using mobile money rather than disbursing in cash and that disbursement statements issued by MFS providers will suffice for USAID compliance.

6. Findings from the Pre- and Post-Workshop Assessment

Workshop participants from USAID/Bangladesh IPs took part in the workshop pre- and post-assessments, which gave an opportunity to assess the level of change in their knowledge regarding mobile money (MM). A summary of the findings is described below.

6.1 Findings from Participant Mobile Money Capacity Assessment

One of the objectives of the workshop assessment was to measure how much participants learned from the workshop. The result of participant mobile money (MM) understanding can be summarized below:

ID No.	Pre assessment score	Post assessment score	Changes (Post Workshop Score- Pre-workshop Score)	Percentage of increase in understanding MM
1	10	15	5	20%
2	5	15	10	40%
3	10	15	5	20%
4	0	10	10	40%
5	5	10	5	20%
6	10	15	5	20%
7	15	20	5	20%
8	5	10	5	20%
10	6	10	4	16%
11	10	25	15	60%
12	25	25	0	0%
13	17	25	8	32%
14	20	25	5	20%
15	15	25	10	40%

Average Improvement	26%
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	Achieved 100% score in pre and post assessments
	Didn't achieve the required change of at least 20%

As can be seen in the chart above, the participants showed an increase in their understanding of MM as a result of participating in this workshop. The average change in participant scores was 26%.

Improvement from pre-test (%)	No. of Participants	Percentage of participants
< 20%	2	14%
20%-29%	7	50%
30%-39%	1	7%
40%-49%	3	21%

50%-59%	0	0%
≥ 60%	1	7%

50% of participants achieved an increase of 20%-29% in understanding MM; another 35% gained an advancement of 30% or more on MM.

6.2 Participants' major takeaways

The five major takeaways as a result of participating at the workshop are summarized below:

Issues	Frequency of responses
Critical MFS usage behavior of people	4
Utilization of merchant account	5
Learnt about quantitative information of MFS in Bangladesh	5
Learnt about MFS and mSTAR/B activities	5
Details on MFS providers and users	6
MFS experiences and challenges in USAID projects	7

24% of the participants were able to learn about MFS providers and users. 20% of participants found the workshop beneficial as they learnt about quantitative information of MFS in Bangladesh, MFS and mSTAR/B activities as well as utilization of merchant account. Another 16% participants noted that the learning about critical MFS usage behavior of people is one of the best achievements from the workshop.

6.3 Participants' suggestions for further interventions

Participants suggested a number of potential topics that they would like to see in future mSTAR workshops. The suggestions are as follows:

SL	Future suggestions	Frequency	%
1	Arrange practical sessions on how to use MFS	5	20
2	Clarify the linkage between mSTAR and MFS providers	3	12
3	Discuss on how to make single payment using MFS	2	8
4	Arrange sessions on how to perform transactions using MM	6	24
5	Present beneficiary experiences (especially the benefits)	5	20
6	mSTAR should invite MFS providers in the workshops	4	16

Annex – I Participants' Details

SL	Name	Designation	Organization
1	S.M Kamrul Hasan	Sr. Grants & Contract Officer	EngenderHealth Bangladesh
2	Shamima Shultana	Sr. Finance Officer	EngenderHealth Bangladesh
3	Mezanur Rahman	IT Officer	EngenderHealth Bangladesh
4	Ayesha Siddiqua	Finance and Admin Manager	Helen Keller International
5	Hasibul Hasan	Senior Admin Officer	Helen Keller International
6	Subal Chandra Shom	Finance and Grants Manager	Helen Keller International
7	Nesar Uddin Sayeed	Director Finance and Grants	ACDI/VOCA
8	Sk. Masudur Rahman	Deputy Director	Dnet
9	Md. Forhad Uddin	Head of Impact	Dnet
10	Murad Ahmed	Portfolio Officer	WorldFish
11	Erik Keus	COP	WorldFish
12	Muazzem Ahmed	Grants Manager	Winrock International
13	Brishti Barua	Admin Assistant	Winrock International
14	Rabiul Islam	Accounts and Audit Officer	International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC)
15	Ashique Mahmud	Finance and Accounting Officer	Development Alternatives Inc.
16	Jeff deGraffenried	Activity Manager	USAID
17	Jon Thiele	COP	CARE
18	Josh Woodard	Regional ICT & Digital Finance Specialist - mSTAR	FHI 360
19	Kathrin Tegenfeldt	Country Director	FHI 360
20	Ataur Rahman	Team Lead – mSTAR	FHI 360
21	Jaheed Parvez	Mobile Money Specialist	FHI 360
22	Md Ariful Islam	M&E Specialist	FHI 360
23	Muhymin Chowdhury	Research Specialist	FHI 360
24	Kazi Amit Imran	Communication Specialist	FHI 360
25	Shamsin Ahmed	Mobile Money Associate	FHI 360

Annex – 2

Pre & Post Assessment Questionnaires

Workshop on ‘Mobile Money Impact: Experiences from the Field’
May 12, 2015
Workshop Pre-assessment

Participant Name:

Organization:

Position:

Cell:

E-mail:

I. Organizational mobile money usage

I.1 Do you use mobile money payment within your organization or any of your projects?

Yes

No

Used previously; not now

2. Pre Assessment questionnaire

2.1 How much does it cost to open a personal mobile money account?

2.2 Please select the correct choice for the statement-‘any form of photo identification is sufficient to open a personal mobile money account’

True

False

2.3 Please select the correct choice for the statement-‘You are allowed to have more than one mobile money account with the same mobile financial service provider’

True

False

2.4 Which is higher in Bangladesh-the number of mobile money agents or the number of bank branches?

2.5 Name all of the different services that you can avail from mobile financial service providers in Bangladesh.

Workshop on ‘Mobile Money Impact: Experiences from the Field’
 May 12, 2015
Workshop Post-assessment

Participant Name:

Organization:

Position:

Cell:

E-mail:

3. Assessment of Workshop Sessions

Session Name	Session Content	Session Presentation
An overview of mSTAR Bangladesh	Very Informative <input type="checkbox"/> Informative <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat informative <input type="checkbox"/> Not informative at all <input type="checkbox"/>	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/>
Mobile Money and its Impact: Experiences from mSTAR Grantees	Very Informative <input type="checkbox"/> Informative <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat informative <input type="checkbox"/> Not informative at all <input type="checkbox"/>	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/>
Overview of the main findings of the mSTAR’s report on Mobile Financial Services in Bangladesh: A Survey of Current Services, Regulations, and Usage in Select USAID Projects	Very Informative <input type="checkbox"/> Informative <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat informative <input type="checkbox"/> Not informative at all <input type="checkbox"/>	Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/>

4. Please list the major takeaways that you achieved from this workshop

5. Please write down your suggestions/expectations for/from future mSTAR workshops

6. Post Assessment Questionnaire

6.1 How much does it cost to open a personal mobile money account?

6.2 Please select the correct choice for the statement-‘any form of photo identification is sufficient to open a personal mobile money account’

True

False

6.3 Please select the correct choice for the statement-‘You are allowed to have more than one mobile money account with the same mobile financial service provider’

True

False

6.4 Which is higher in Bangladesh-the number of mobile money agents or the number of bank branches?

6.5 Name all of the different services that you can avail from mobile financial service providers in Bangladesh.