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Issue 3

MESSAGE FROM THE PROJECT DIRECTOR

Happy New Year! We are looking forward to working with you in 2014.

As we are always hoping to improve our work, please send any feedback to sadinolfi@fhi360.org.

Shailee Adinolfi

IN THIS ISSUE

Get caught up on the latest happenings for the mSTAR program in Mozambique, Bangladesh, and regionally in Asia. Also check out what mSTAR consortium member, Freedom from Hunger, has been doing with mTraining and get an update on the GSMA mWOMEN Working Group meeting in Manila. And don't forget to also take note of the upcoming events to look forward to in January!

COUNTRY ACTIVITIES

MOZAMBIQUE

FHI 360 finalized a subagreement with University of Cape Town to implement the mVacciNation study, which will examine the effectiveness of Vodafone's new mobile application intended to increase childhood vaccination rates in Mozambique. The study was funded by USAID, Vodafone, and GAVI.

RDMA

USAID's Regional Development Mission in Asia, together with FHI 360 and Open Revolution, held a mobile solutions contest to recognize firms in Southeast Asia that are demonstrating impact in the M4D space. The winners were announced at the one-day Mobile Solutions Forum in Bangkok, Thailand on January 6, 2014. Finalists include the SPICE IVR Platform, developed by Open Institute; LISA developed by 8VILLAGES; the Fansipan Challenge, developed by FHI 360; A-Eye, developed by King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi; and Commcare, developed by Dimagi. Follow the twitter discussion using #m4dAsia.

BANGLADESH

mSTAR is working to integrate mobile money and electronic payments into the programs and operations of USAID implementing partners, beginning with agriculture and health programs. In December, the mSTAR Bangladesh team met with 14 organizations to about their current activities and the use mobile money within their programs. The team also met with two leading mobile network operators and three mobile financial service providers to gauge their readiness for the emerging mobile money market in Bangladesh. Further meetings with existing users of mobile money payments, including English in Action, HelpAge International, and BRAC provided the opportunity to learn about their integration of mobile money payments; on-going relevant mobile money interventions, and the challenges in the process. ■

MSTAR CONSORTIUM UPDATES

FREEDOM FROM HUNGER

mTraining: In order to cost-effectively meet the needs of the very poor with integrated financial and non-financial services, Freedom from Hunger has empowered volunteer Community Agents – illiterate or low-literate village women and youth – who organize savings groups in Benin with mobile phone guides loaded with Savings Groups Formation Meeting animations and a [Business Education Application](#). After a year of testing, the mobile phone is proving to be a reliable and effective job aid for illiterate facilitators. To date, 60 Community Agents have organized almost 5,000 women and youth into savings groups, enabling access to safe savings, affordable small loans and behavior-change education to improve business activities.

In 2014, Freedom from Hunger looks forward to building on its success and further leveraging mobile phones as a tool for illiterate facilitators by replicating this low-cost delivery model, developing new business and health education mobile apps, diversifying mobile services and directly reaching the very poor via mobile voice messaging. To learn more about Freedom from Hunger's mobile technology solutions, contact education@freedomfromhunger.org.

GSMA

In the wake of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, a dedicated group of operators, NGOs, social entrepreneurs, and donors came together in Manila for the GSMA mWomen Working Group from November 19 to 21st. This event, co-hosted by Smart and Grameen, was a unique gathering designed to facilitate a candid discussion around how to better serve women through mobile services and to reflect on the opportunities and challenges that exist when designing and delivering mWomen offerings to resource-poor women. Participants surfaced the importance in recognizing 'offline' networks and existing behavioural norms when designing mobile services for women, as well as engaging in a deep review of the Ooredoo Group's market entry into Myanmar. For more information, please see the GSMA mWomen blog, "[GSMA mWomen Working Group meeting Manila: Where do we go next?](#)" ■

MWOMEN WEBINAR

GSMA mWomen and NetHope will be hosting a webinar on *Women and Mobile Financial Services* on January 30th at 11 am EST. Presenters Grameen Foundation and MEDA will be discussing lessons learned in deploying mobile money solutions targeting women in the base of the pyramid, and GSMA mWomen will present research on increasing women's access to and usage of mobile financial services in emerging markets. To receive webinar updates including information on how to attend, please follow GSMA mWomen on Twitter (@GSMAMWomen) or sign up for our newsletter at www.mwomen.org. ■

OPPORTUNITIES & CONSULTANTS

An RFA will be released in late January for consortium partners who responded to the 2013 open call for concepts and submitted a shortlisted concept note. A technical review committee will evaluate the applications in February, and we anticipate awarding grants in March.

An RFP for Ethnographic Studies will be released on January 13, 2014.

MDATA

mSTAR is working with USAID's Mobile Data team to outline a user-friendly toolkit for USAID staff and implementing partners who are thinking about transitioning from paper data collection to mobiles. A solicitation for a technical writer will be released later this month.

CASE WRITER

FHI 360 is looking for highly motivated and creative writer(s) with excellent communication skills to join our mSTAR team on a short-term, part-time basis to coordinate and write two case studies for mSTAR; one of which focuses on birth registration in Nigeria and another which focuses on transferring data into dialogue, action and financial services in Uganda. Apply soon! The deadline is quickly approaching.

Check with FHI360 for more information on these potential opportunities: <http://www.fhi360.org/partner-us>. ■

mSTAR

EVENTS

mSTAR Consortium Happy Hour: Coming in February 2014.

Technology Salon: Sign up to get invited to future tech salons at <http://techsalon.org/join>

GSMA mWomen Webinar: Women and Mobile Financial Services on January 30th at 11 am. See above for more information.

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