As part of a wider study into the current position and future possibilities for Mobile technologies and services for development, Gamos, along with its partners has gathered 10 case studies of existing Mobile for Development (M4D) projects. Analysis of these case studies uncovers the reach, value and some of the challenges relating to M4D programmes as well as answering the question, what makes the mobile so useful in a development context?

The 10 case studies selected fall into 7 sector categories and cover counties in Africa, Asia and Australasia. Detailed descriptions of each project along with links to individual project websites are available in the full report (link below).

Key points from the analysis are:

- M4D programmes carry **advantages** in terms of accessibility, speed, empowering women and complimenting other forms of technology.
- M4D projects can be either **transformative** – offering a service that previously did not exist – or **offering improvement** – improving the delivery of a service in terms of speed, cost , reliability and efficiency.

- The majority of projects are regarded as either pilots or in the early stages of development. Many have conducted limited small sample research in order to prove the concept. Half of these had **clear intentions to expand**.
- 5 of the 10 case studies had **achieved national reach** as their services were distributed through national mobile operators. Certain projects only had local relevance and would require duplication of many cost components to increase their reach.

- **Challenges** to expansion included technical training, both in terms of data collection and processing. Obviously the extent of training depends on how quickly people can grasp the concepts involved. Furthermore, in certain cases users struggled to understand the potential of services.
- Therefore, generally speaking, **simplicity of concept is key to achieving scale**.
- M4D systems can be implemented for a relatively **modest cost** – typically around $50,000.
- The sustainability of M4D projects very much depends on the **ability to provide a return on investment**. The case studies reveal four broad ways this can be achieved: Consumer pays; Company pays; Service provider pays; community pays. One project where the authenticity of drugs is validated achieved a 1,000% return on an investment for one pharmaceutical investor.

- African countries tended to lack local capacity to lead ICT based projects. Whereas in the

case of several Asian examples the development of the services was sourced locally.

- Mobiles are particularly effective in reaching women, due largely to the fact that women can use mobiles at times and in locations that are convenient to them.

View the full report:

What Makes the Mobile So Useful in a Development Context? Analysis of 10 Case Studies