IN 2011, SAFARICOM, the leading provider of converged communications solutions in Kenya committed to leverage its core expertise in mobile telephony to extend mHealth solutions in support of women and children’s health in Kenya.

The company’s three-pronged commitment included: reaching 20,000 community health workers and 1.5m pregnant women in Kenya with health-related SMS messages and pre- and post-natal phone support; providing an affordable and convenient saving option for maternity and post natal care using the M-PESA solution that currently has over 18 million users; and supporting the Government of Kenya’s District Health Information System through feeding it with reports from Safaricom’s mobile health enabling platform. This platform connects community health via virtual call centres staffed by medical professionals, thus providing vital health information via Safaricom’s portal and SMS-based solutions.

Key Results:

Linda Jamii (Protect your Family) Medical Micro Insurance Product, launched in 2014
- Provides health insurance, including maternity benefits, priced for the mass market
- 42,000 families subscribed and growing

Jamii Smart (Smart Family)
- Automates continuum of care for children from conception until the age of 5
- Sends alerts and reminders to mothers and health workers on clinic visits, expected day of delivery, immunizations and other information
- Provides real time, cloud based reporting on MNCH indicators through integration with the Ministry’s District Health Information system
- Pilot phase of 1000 families to be scaled nationwide in 2015

Health Enabled Learning Platform (HELP)
- Training of Community Health Workers using SMS and voice recording
- 300 Community Health Workers (CHWs) and 18 supervisors trained in phase I in nomadic, urban and rural settings, reaching 30,000 families. Currently scaling to 3 000 CHWs in phase II aiming to reach 300,000 families.
- In 4 months of Phase I, retention rates of teams trained using mLearning were 12% higher vis a vis face to face training, with a 4.7/5 satisfaction rating

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PARTNERSHIPS

As a telecommunications services provider, Safaricom recognizes that it is not an expert in healthcare. It was therefore imperative that the company form partnerships to implement its commitment. These diverse partnerships bring together the public and private sectors as well as civil society and successfully leverage Safaricom’s expertise in technology, distribution and reach to extend services to mothers, children and others who otherwise are excluded.

Launched in 2014, Linda Jamii (Protect your Family) is a medical Micro Insurance Product created through a collaboration with Britam Insurance Company and Changamka MicroInsurance. This innovation provides affordable health insurance to families, including for quality maternal care in private hospitals. Jamii Smart (Smart Family) is a unique product that provides information to mothers and health care workers and is linked to the Ministry of Health’s District Health Information System. It was created through a broad-based collaboration between the Kenya Ministry of Health, World Vision, AMREF Health Africa, Care and Aga Khan.

As a supporter of the Health Enabled Learning Platform (HELP) an mLearning platform, Safaricom’s M-PESA Foundation is partnering with AMREF Health Africa, Accenture, Accenture Foundation and the Kenyan Ministry of Health.

In addition to these partnerships, Safaricom’s Corporate Social Investment arm has spent US$4.7 million on health related projects that support women and children’s health, funding NGOs and other partners to support the company’s MNCH programs.

LESSONS LEARNED

Safaricom has recognized that partnerships are critical for successful MHealth outcomes. However, these must be well constituted and managed. The company has realized the importance of defining a clear governance structure; ensuring that every partner operates in the area of their strength, and the necessity to paint a clear, shared picture of success at the outset towards which all partners advance.

Products such as Linda Jamii and Jamii Smart have demonstrated that it is possible for Safaricom to achieve its vision of “Transforming Lives”, while at the same time creating new revenue-generating products for the company. This combination endears Safaricom to its customers, increases loyalty and continues to attract new customers.

NEXT STEPS

Going forward, the company plans to scale up projects that started out as pilots or as phased roll-outs such as Jamii Smart and HELP. This will require additional funding to support the implementing partners such as the Ministry of Health and collaborating NGOs. Safaricom will continue to roll out solutions that address the company’s Every Woman Every Child commitment both through its business activities and its Corporate Social Investment programs.