

Terms of Reference – *Baselining Mobile for Development: Increasing Digital Literacy Skills and Digital Inclusion*

9/10/2024

Introduction

The GSMA

The GSMA is a global organisation unifying the mobile ecosystem to discover, develop and deliver innovation foundational to positive business environments and societal change. Our vision is to unlock the full power of connectivity so that people, industry and society thrive. Representing mobile operators and organisations across the mobile ecosystem and adjacent industries, the GSMA delivers for its members across three broad pillars: Connectivity for Good, Industry Solutions and Events.

The GSMA Mobile for Development Foundation Inc.

The GSMA Mobile for Development Foundation, Inc. (“GSMA”) is a U.S. 501(c)(3) charitable organisation. The Mobile for Development team (M4D) operates at the intersection of the mobile ecosystem and the development sector. Our aim is to stimulate digital innovation and deliver both sustainable business and large-scale socio-economic impact. Our research and insights platform, in-market expertise and community of partners push forward digital innovations and implementations that empower underserved populations. To date, we have impacted the lives of over 220 million people.

Context

Today more than 3 billion people worldwide are not using mobile internet, despite being within the footprint of a mobile broadband network. Affordability remains a key barrier, yet a lack of the essential digital skills required to use mobile internet as well as awareness of internet use cases prevent the unconnected from using and benefitting from mobile internet.

To address this barrier, the GSMA developed the Mobile Internet Skills Training Toolkit (MISTT). MISTT is a set of free resources for teaching people the basic mobile digital skills they need to access and use mobile internet. The toolkit uses a ‘train the trainer’ approach and consists of short lessons available in PDF and video format that can be easily adapted to local needs and languages and delivered to customers in a range of different ways. The toolkit has been used by many mobile network operators (MNOs) and organisations seeking to increase digital inclusion in their markets. To date, more than 70 million people across more than 40 countries have been trained using the MISTT.

This project, managed by the Mobile for Development Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) team and funded by the UK’s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, will be a baseline for GSMA’s upcoming Strategic Partnership 3 (SP3).

Project overview and Objectives

The baseline will aim to review the existing evidence on the impact and effectiveness of digital skills training. It will draw on M4D’s current data, evidence from previous MISTT case studies, as well as a systematic review of external evidence. This study will reflect on MISTT’s impact to date, using existing evidence and possibly some interviews. It will also position M4D’s work in the context of other

organizations' and Mobile Network Operators' approaches to digital literacy training. This will help us build our own evidence base, identify potential areas for impact in SP3, and address key questions about the most effective digital literacy training methods.

Baseline questions could include:

- a. What evidence do we have within M4D, and in the external evidence base, that digital skills training increases uptake of mobile internet in LMICs?
- b. What is the quality and spread (geographically and across different population segments) of this evidence?
- c. Do we have evidence on the role of digital skills in relation to other barriers to access, such as the pricing of handsets and data? How effective is digital skills training in isolation, as well as alongside complementary initiatives? How much does digital skill training move the needle with and without other initiatives?
- d. Does the way in which the digital skills training is administered matter for its effectiveness? How does M4D's evidence compare to other organisations' and MNOs' findings? Does this differ by geography?
- e. Does the effectiveness of the digital skills training rely on the delivery of other interventions simultaneously? Which interventions?
- f. What are the limitations of digital skills training to increase access to mobile internet?
- g. Is there evidence to suggest any causal relationship between digital skills training and economic or other wellbeing outcomes?

Methodology

Prospective bidders should propose a robust approach that can best answer the evaluation questions listed above. We would envision the following key components but would welcome suggestions:

- A broader literature review and expert interviews, including consultations with partner organizations within the FCDO portfolio
- Interviews with key stakeholders, including M4D team members and a limited set of external stakeholders
- Comprehensive review and comparative analysis of both historical and current M4D data
- If feasible and appropriate, we could also consider conducting a brief SMS-based survey with MISTT training participants

Deliverables and timelines

Key activities	Timeline
Kick-off meeting	18 th November 2024
Co-creation of baseline scope, evaluation plan with analytical framework, and tool design confirmed in short inception report Submitted in a Word doc, between 7-10 pages	4 th December 2024
Data collection and analysis	December 2024 – February 2025
Sensemaking workshop and interim findings	25 th February 2025
Report and Powerpoint presentation of the results submitted to GSMA contract manager for review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report should include a summary of the approach used, results of the baseline, key findings, datasets, recommendations. Maximum of 25 pages, excluding annexes	21 st March 2025

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Powerpoint presentation should be a maximum of 25 slides | |
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Firm and proposal requirements

The GSMA is searching for a consultant who can deliver in response to the outlined objectives. Ideally, they will have:

- A strong background in implementing mixed methods evaluations in LMICs, please provide examples of previous projects
- Advanced qualitative data analysis skills (we anticipate data collection focusing on qualitative, however please include relevant quantitative experience)
- Demonstrated experience in ecosystem mapping, particularly in the digital technology sector, as well as previous work with public and private sector stakeholders. Please provide relevant examples
- Strong ability to analyze complex ecosystems, stakeholder motivations, and regulatory environments. Please provide examples
- Ability to design and implement metrics and benchmarks for assessing impact and effectiveness of partnerships and initiatives
- Familiarity with emerging technologies e.g AI and IoT, and their application in creating inclusive and sustainable solutions

The bidders should submit an evaluation plan, including a detailed description for the proposed methodology and timeline. The methodology should clearly specify how it will help answer the baseline questions. Bidders should also outline what types of quality assurance mechanisms they will put in place to ensure data quality, integrity and accuracy.

GSMA requires the appointed supplier to be fully transparent about subcontractors they intend to use and GSMA has the power to veto selection. The supplier is expected to comply with GDPR in data collection and processing. The supplier will need to have and adhere to research approvals, as required. They are also expected to establish and review assessment risks, challenges and limitations and recommend how these will be managed. This should include:

- Methodology limitations
- Insufficient capacity/availability/interest in the chosen scope
- Reputational risk for the GSMA (in the event of damaging findings)

The successful Bidder is expected to:

- Provide a named key point of contact
- Respond to emails from the GSMA within 2 working days
- Organise weekly status meetings (same time each week) to report on project progress
- Inform the GSMA about delays and complications in a timely manner
- All communication both written and verbal to the GSMA to be conducted in English

Suppliers wishing to be considered should submit a proposal by **17:30 GMT, Monday, 28th October 2024** for this work to Daisy Macaskie (dmacaskie@gsma.com) and Ruth Orbach (rorbach@gsma.com).

Evaluations of proposals will take into account the following elements. It is unlikely the GSMA will consider proposals that do not include all elements listed. We ask that proposals be concise, to speed up the selection process.

- 1) Understanding of the brief and intended approach:** Suppliers should outline their understanding of the requirements and the value they believe the results will have, as well as how they intend to deliver the project objectives as specified above. This should include:
 - a) How you intend to meet the requirements of this document;
 - b) Proposed analytical framework for conducting the study

- c) Considerations/limitations in response to objectives;
 - d) Suggestions for alternative/supplementary approaches to address the central objectives;
 - e) An indicative timeline for delivery and demonstration of capacity to meet this; and.
 - f) State any dependencies on GSMA staff.
- 2) Team and responsibilities:** The proposed team should be included with a short bio alongside the proposed roles.
- 3) Quality assurance and risks/mitigation strategies:** All RFQ responses should include how any potential risks may be mitigated, e.g. security risks, COVID-19, etc.
- 4) Data storage and confidentiality plan:** We expect all our suppliers to comply with the EU General Data Protection Regulation. The selected supplier will be responsible for obtaining appropriate consent from all interview and survey participants.
- 5) Itemized quote:** Suppliers should provide a fully itemized quote; a template can be found at the bottom of this document. The GSMA default currency requirement for all proposals is 'UK Pounds Sterling'.
- a) All costs should clearly demonstrate breakdowns in terms of staff time, travel, direct costs, and other expenses.
 - b) Suppliers are also asked to provide costs for any alternative or supplementary approaches suggested in your proposal.
 - c) We suggest suppliers provide scalable costs that enable GSMA to commission work at a relevant size (i.e. cost per additional interview).

Due to GSMA compliance, exact project budgets cannot be provided at this stage. You are, however, able to provide a few implementation / budget options that can help assess value for money and we can align our project scope to the relevant budget after a consultant has been selected.

We estimate the total number of days required to be 35-40.

Budget Template

Please provide the total price and the breakdown by unit cost using the table below as a template.¹ Please quote all rates in GBP, excluding VAT, and highlight cost savings.

Name	Role	Delivery stage/ activity	Volume/ Item	Standard rate/ Cost (Daily rate)	Total Charge
<i>e.g. Peter James</i>	<i>e.g. Senior Adviser</i>	<i>e.g. Inception stage: Desk research</i>	<i>e.g. 5 days</i>	£	£xx
					£xx
					£xx
					£xx

¹ Please feel free to break down costs further to provide more clarity as required.

Name	Role	Delivery stage/ activity	Volume/ Item	Standard rate/ Cost (Daily rate)	Total Charge
					£xx

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