

Mobile initiative aids pilot paediatric project

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Alcatel-Lucent, together with the Orange Mali Foundation, Afrique Initiatives, Médicament Export (Médex) and Kafo Yeredeme Ton, has announced the launch of a pilot project called *Pésinet*, in the district of Bamako Coura in Mali. *Pésinet* has been designed to provide preventative healthcare services for children from 0 to 5 years old from low-income households thanks to remote diagnosis based on the mobile tracking and monitoring of changes in the children's weight.

The service consists of weighing children in their homes every week – two times a week for children under one year old - using local trained members of the community. The “weighing agents” enter children's weight and additional illness symptoms in their mobile phones via a dedicated JAVA applet. This is then sent through the GPRS network to a database that has been designed to assist the *Pésinet* pediatrician in quickly identifying potentially ill children. The service also includes examination by the doctor and access to certain medication when necessary.

“Although tracking weight changes is a very basic healthcare service, it has proven to be very effective at identifying a number of illnesses, from malnutrition to malaria, and enabling timely medical intervention. Access to medicine is also a true added-value of this service for the population,” explains Robert Dulery, Manager of Médicament Export.

Sponsoring the project

Alcatel-Lucent and Afrique Initiatives provided financial support and technical expertise to launch this pilot project. Médex also contributed to finance the project and provided a stock of medicine for the duration of the pilot phase. The Orange Mali Foundation is also financially supporting the project and has supplied equipment (eight baby scales, and six mobile phones). A team of students from the ESSEC Business School and the Ecole Centrale Paris has developed the business plan as part of a joint academic program aimed at creating innovative products or services. The Malian NGO Kafo Yeredeme Ton is running the operations locally.

Michel Rocard, President and founder of Afrique Initiatives adds: “One of the key elements of our approach for this project has been to partner with local structures. The fact that a local NGO is directly managing the project will undoubtedly help to ensure that the service is adapted to their needs and that they adhere to it.”

Alioune NDIAYE, CEO of Orange Mali and President of the Orange Mali Foundation adds: “It is one of our core commitments to support projects that improve healthcare in Mali. As a leading operator in the region, we are happy to be able to use our technologies to help reduce child mortality in the communities where we live and work.”

“We are particularly proud to participate in this original initiative which emphasizes how Information and Communication Technologies can effectively improve the living conditions of disadvantaged people in emerging countries by allowing the development of new services based on innovative business models. *Pésinet*, a self-sustaining project, demonstrates that supplying services to low-income households could help achieve a more inclusive global society,” concludes Thierry Albrand, Vice President Digital Bridge Initiative of Alcatel-Lucent.

About Afrique Initiatives

Afrique Initiative is a limited company created and headed by Michel ROCARD and financed by most of the French companies operating in Africa in order to support sustainable entrepreneurship in Africa. To do so, Afrique Initiative thrives to develop SMEs in the formal sector that are both economically viable and useful locally, by accompanying them in the field through financial and managerial support. In 2006, thanks to the support of its main shareholders (BOLLORE, TOTAL, VEOLIA, CFAO), Afrique Initiatives became an investors' club, thus allowing all its shareowners to directly take part in

development projects in Africa.

About Médicament Export

Medex is a pharmaceutical wholesaler for exportation mainly to French-speaking Africa. This company, created in April 1992, has become a leader in the trading and promotion of a range specialized affordable drugs. These drugs are preference treatment for heavy and recurrent pathologies often present in developing countries (paludism, parasitosis, STD...). Maloxine, Verzol, Fébrilex+, or Fercéfol to name just a few, are among the most largely sold products in this zone. The objective of the company is to provide populations in Africa with affordable quality medication.

About the Orange Mali Foundation

As part of its corporate social responsibility and as a leader player in the Malian economy, Orange Mali has decided to reinforce its charitable activities and has put in place, through its foundation, an active program to help authorities in fighting against poverty and support the most disadvantaged populations. The Orange Mali Foundation focuses on health, education and culture.

About Kafo Yeredeme Ton

Active in the areas of health, education, sport, women and children support and environment protection, the non-governmental organization Kafo Yeredeme Ton, created in 2001, aims at promoting and fostering the socio-economic and cultural development of the district. It is open to all inhabitants and friends of Bamako Coura.

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