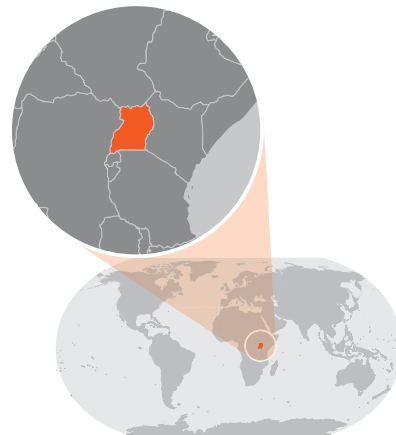


LIVING GOODS UGANDA



Empowering
Micro-Entrepreneurs To
Deliver Life-Changing
Products To The
Doorsteps Of The Poor

BACKGROUND

Living Goods operates networks of Avon-like micro-entrepreneurs who go door-to-door selling a wide range of life-changing products, including treatments for malaria and diarrhea, fortified foods, clean cook stoves, and solar lights. Our networks of franchised micro-entrepreneurs, over 1,000 in Uganda, leverage Living Goods' brand, buying power and marketing tools to deliver vital products at accessible prices to the people who need them most. By combining the best practices from the worlds of micro-enterprise, franchising and public health, Living Goods is creating a fully sustainable system to improve the health, wealth, and productivity of the world's poor.

LIVING GOOD'S MOBILE PLATFORM

We built an end-to-end mobile platform designed to drive demand, increase access, and reduce costs for delivering products that save and change lives. Simple phones are quickly becoming the single most transformative tool for our success: empowering agents to earn more, delivering targeted health messages, dramatically lowering the cost to market and monitor, enabling real time salesforce management and igniting social connections that drive impact and business success. By fusing together best practice mHealth applications, mobile marketing tools, and robust user training this comprehensive technology platform is quickly becoming the backbone of our business model.

We're building a powerful client database across the regions we serve - to date, we have over 35,000 numbers in Uganda. We're leveraging that database and the speed and efficiency of mobile to driver better health in many ways:



Nanyanzi Harriet, a Living Goods agent in Nsangi, Uganda, with two of her clients. Harriet registered them both to receive the 'Happy Baby' SMS Service. Both appreciated the service and are proud to show off their healthy newborns. Nahura Sharon (left) said it was like "having a hospital at home". (Photo Credit: Tine Frank)



Intensive hands-on training with agents on how to access and send SMS messages is key to the platform's success. Sarah Balisanyuka, our Mafubira agent, bragged, "In the beginning there were challenges, but now I've gotten used to the system. I send SMS reports faster than my written reports." (Photo Credit: Living Goods)

REAL TIME TREATMENT REMINDERS: Every day, agents use their phones to upload treatments for malaria, diarrhea, and respiratory infection in real time to the Living Goods data warehouse. After agents send a treatment SMS, their client receives free automated treatment adherence reminders.

QUICKER, CHEAPER QUALITY CONTROL: Before mobile phones all program monitoring was done on foot – a slow, costly approach. Now, when agents log treatments by mobile Living Goods can call or text clients immediately to check the quality and accuracy of diagnoses.

HELP ON CALL: All our agents post their mobile number in every client home. Clients can call their agent any time of day or night when a child is ill to get immediate advice or request a house call. This saves parents time, trouble and worry, and helps kids get treated faster.

ENSURING HEALTHY PREGNANCIES: Agents use SMS to register every pregnant woman and newborn child in their community. Once enrolled, these clients receive automated stage and age appropriate SMS messages to promote a healthy pregnancy and safe delivery. This free SMS service improves health impact and helps agents build stronger customer relationships that drive more sales her way.

USE OF MAMA MESSAGES

We used MAMA's maternal health messages to inspire our set of automated SMS messages for pregnant women and new mothers – our 'Happy Baby' service. Once enrolled by their agents, clients receive automated weekly stage and age appropriate SMS messages to encourage a healthy pregnancy and delivery.

The 'Happy Baby' service is part of our larger goal to not only build awareness and educate but also drive action. To support our agents on the ground and increase their sales, we end several messages with a clear call to action including the name and mobile number of the client's agent. We integrate specific product recommendations that support a healthy pregnancy, like iron folate, clean burning cook stoves, and safe delivery kits - all available through our agents - into the messages.

EXAMPLE: Dizziness, headaches, tiredness are all symptoms of low iron. Take a daily iron supplement. Need iron? Call Living Goods (Nakamya Rebecca 0774862596).

We also include educational messages to attain a healthy pregnancy, not necessarily linked to our agents' products and sales. Many of these messages come directly from MAMA with slight variations.

EXAMPLE: You are eating for two now! Make sure to eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, meat and beans.

And finally, leveraging findings from MAMA, we use emotionally engaging messages to keep our clients interested and engaged in the service throughout their pregnancy and beyond. Again, many of these messages come directly from MAMA.



Agents use SMS to register every pregnant woman and newborn child in their community. Once enrolled, these clients receive automated stage and age appropriate SMS messages to promote a healthy pregnancy and safe delivery. (Photo Credit: Esther Havens)



Agents support and track all pregnant women in their service areas through regular visits, home-based education, and doorstep delivery of essential health products like vitamin supplements, de-worming medication, malaria prophylaxis, and clean birthing kits (seen here). (Photo Credit: Tine Frank)

EXAMPLE: Your baby is about the size of half a banana! If you could look inside your belly you would see a fully formed baby with ten fingers and toes.

In less than one year, since our use of MAMA messages began, over 7,300 pregnant women have been registered.

CHALLENGES

The challenges we've encountered may sound familiar to other organizations working in BoP markets. Our system is dependent upon agents collecting and uploading client information via SMS. But when we began we found that basic texting was still foreign to many agents. To increase agent usage, we provided intensive training and an incentive scheme to drive adoption. In addition, many agents shared phones with their family members and did not always carry them in the field – making it difficult to register clients on the spot. In response, we offered our agents financing for a good-quality, low-price phone - more than 40 percent of agents bought one.

FUTURE PLANS

We believe that good business is good development. Our long-term goal is to establish a thriving double bottom-line business. But to create a commercially viable venture, we must first achieve sustainability of our county operations. Our mobile system is a key component to reaching that sustainability. It empowers our agents to earn more, dramatically lowers our cost to market and monitor, enables real time salesforce management and improves our health impacts.

Not unlike MAMA, we believe in the power of sharing our methods and tools with other organizations. To create impact at scale, we intend to facilitate widespread replication of our micro-franchise model. No single organization can solve the problems we confront at the scale they exist today. In that spirit, we established a separate division exclusively dedicated to providing consulting support and tools to help our partner organizations learn from, optimize, and deploy Living Goods inspired micro-franchise systems.



Mobile Alliance for Maternal Action

The MAMA Community Spotlight series shines a light on some of the great work being done by organizations using MAMA's adaptable mobile messages. Each month we feature a new organization that has downloaded our messages and is using mobile technology to improve maternal, newborn and child health.

Inspired by these innovative programs? Download the MAMA messages for yourself by visiting www.mobilemamaalliance.org and completing our short questionnaire.

For inquiries about working with our partnership, contact:

MAMA Global
tel: 202.887.9040
email: info@mobilemamaalliance.org

Media Inquiries, contact:

Mabinty Koroma
tel: 202.862.6315
email: mkoroma@mobilemamaalliance.org

