

mHealth for healthy babies

Background

Angola has a high child mortality rate under the age of 5 due to lack of adequate health service provision and pre-natal education for mothers in rural communities continues to be a challenge. If effective interventions are concretely devised this rate could be reduced significantly.

Exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months of life makes babies healthier and stronger, but according to statistics, only one in every 10 babies under six months are breastfed. Introducing solutions through the use of mobile phone technology in the country, taking into account the high mobile phone penetration (74 subscribers per 100 inhabitants) can help families raise healthy children by providing critical information directly to the hands of mothers and caregivers.

Project focus

Many mothers lack information about good child-rearing practices, but they have mobile phones that can deliver life-saving baby care tips. To turn this idea into a reality, SIPA joined forces with the non-governmental organization, People in Need to start a neonatal mHealth program in March 2015.

Twice a week during the first six months after birth, mothers receive pre-recorded messages up to 90 seconds long promoting good practices on food, nutrition, hygiene and vaccination

Purpose

Following an integrated approach, the project strengthens links among mothers, traditional birth attendants (TBA) and public and private health staff.

Activities

The project provides training to TBAs to improve their skills through raising their awareness on good health practices and further technical training enabling them to attend to mothers and refer them to a proper health institution when the issue exceeds their competencies. This is considered as highly crucial as they oversee more than half of births in rural

communities in Angola. Mothers are then registered into the project database and get access to the natal education system. In turn, mobile phone messages encourage mothers to engage with TBAs and to go to clinics for check-ups and consultations.

Location and target audience

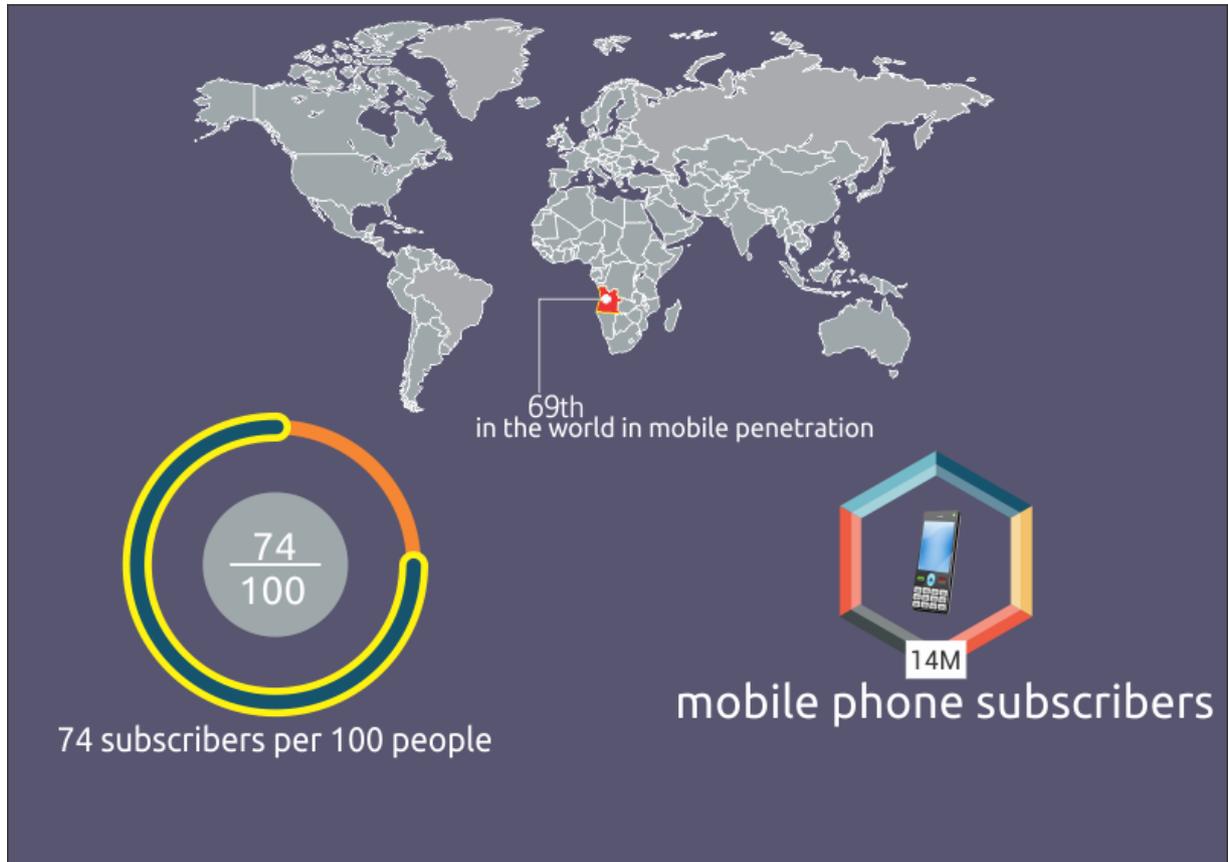
The project targets 60 000 mothers and 360 TBAs in six municipalities in the provinces of Bié, Huambo and Huila. After a six-month pilot phase in two municipalities in Bié, it will eventually expand to Huambo and Huila.

Duration

The project was established in March 2015 and will run until September 2017.

Implementing partner

The main implementing partner is People in Need (PIN)



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