

UK's £30M partnership with GSMA helping people in humanitarian crises with mobile and digital assistance

The UK will commit a further £15.5 million to the GSMA Mobile for Humanitarian (M4H) Innovation Programme, bringing the total amount given by the UK to the M4H programme to £30 million since 2017.

The move enables the GSMA's vital work to deliver mobile and digital humanitarian assistance to those most in need.

It will help the GSMA M4H programme to reach over 17 million people facing global humanitarian crises such as displacement and hunger by 2025. By using new and proven technologies, we can help the world's most vulnerable people during times of crisis.

The GSMA M4H programme has already helped over 8 million with life-enhancing and lifesaving mobile enabled services, helping them to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. With 274 million in people in need of humanitarian assistance globally, this work is urgently needed.

In a speech at MWC22 Barcelona, the UK's Minister for Africa, Vicky Ford said:

Thanks to UK funding, GSMA's programme has served over 8 million people with life-enhancing mobile-enabled services in humanitarian preparedness, response, and recovery.

I am delighted to announce that the UK has committed a further £15.5 million to scale-up the GSMA's humanitarian work, so that we can reach over 17 million vulnerable people with digital humanitarian solutions.

It is clear to me, that if we are to address the devastating situation facing millions of people around the world in need of humanitarian assistance and protection, partnerships between the humanitarian and private sectors are essential.

The partnership between the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and the GSMA M4H Innovation Programme will enable the FCDO to remain at the forefront of humanitarian interventions over the next three years.

The M4H Programme will build partnerships with the private sector and the

global humanitarian community to benefit a total of 17.3 million people with mobile-enabled humanitarian preparedness, response, and recovery.

GSMA's Chief Regulatory Officer, John Giusti, said:

When disaster strikes, it's the world's most vulnerable people who carry the greatest burden and suffer the greatest hardships, from displacement and financial devastation to loss of life. In these moments of crisis, mobile connectivity is a lifeline.

We must continue our efforts to ensure digital technology provides those affected by disaster with the ability to communicate with loved ones and receive essential information and services.

We thank the UK's FCDO for its continued leadership and support in helping to reach the people who need mobile services the most.

The next phase of M4H will focus on five recognised humanitarian trends that mobile-enabled services have a role in addressing: increased demand for humanitarian cash and voucher assistance; increased frequency and intensity of natural hazard disasters; increased number of forcibly displaced people; increased global hunger and food insecurity; and the climate emergency.

New mobile-enabled technologies have already been used to avert humanitarian disaster and address the humanitarian need. The M4H Programme has helped:

- 200,000 Rwandan refugees and 500,000 people from marginalised groups to get better access to humanitarian cash and voucher assistance via mobile money
- Provide communities in Haiti with tailored, interactive information to help them prepare for and respond to extreme weather events. This platform has since been used to provide COVID-19 health information.
- Develop the digital ecosystem in Ethiopia, Burundi, and Nigeria, supporting mobile-enabled cash distribution. For those in crisis, it is a pathway to financial inclusion, dignity, and choice.
- Reach parents and caregivers of Syrian children affected by displacement and conflict with digital, physio-social support.

Notes to Editors

- The GSMA is a global organisation unifying the mobile ecosystem to discover, develop and deliver innovation foundational to positive business environments and societal change. Find out more [here](#) & pressoffice@gsma.com