

# GSMA

## REQUEST FOR QUOTATION

### Inclusive Risk Communications

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# Requested Services and Deliverables

## 1. GSMA overview

The GSMA Mobile for Development Foundation, Inc. (“GSMA M4D”) is a U.S. 501(c)(3) charitable organisation that seeks to relieve poverty and improve living conditions throughout the world through identifying opportunities for social, economic and environmental impact and to stimulate the development of scalable, life-enhancing mobile services. GSMA M4D is a wholly owned subsidiary of the GSM Association (“GSMA”).

The GSMA represents the interests of mobile operators worldwide, uniting nearly 800 operators with more than 300 companies in the broader mobile ecosystem, including handset and device makers, software companies, equipment providers and internet companies, as well as organisations in adjacent industry sectors. The GSMA also produces industry-leading events such as Mobile World Congress, Mobile World Congress Shanghai and the Mobile 360 Series conferences. For more information, please visit the GSMA corporate website at [www.gsma.com](http://www.gsma.com).

For this project, the successful Respondent will contract with The GSMA Mobile for Development Foundation.

## 2. Project overview

### Background

The GSMA Mobile for Humanitarian Innovation (M4H) programme envisions an inclusive digital humanitarian future, where mobile and digital solutions can offer affected populations improved access to and use of life-enhancing mobile-enabled services for preparedness, response and recovery. To build an inclusive and sustainable digital humanitarian future, the M4H programme acts as the convenor between mobile network operator members and humanitarian partners.

This research seeks to assess how inclusive the use of mobile and digital technologies are for risk communication and the potential barriers to receiving, understanding, and using information, using human-centered design methods.

Due to the proliferating climate crisis and its major humanitarian implications, the UN Secretary General announced the Early Warning for All (EW4A) initiative at COP27, tasking the WMO with developing an action plan to make sure every person on earth is protected by an Early Warning System (EWS) by 2027. WMO’s executive action plan incorporates 4 pillars of MHEWS (Multi-Hazard Early Warning System), the 3rd being warning dissemination and communication. Under pillar 3, ‘inclusion and a people-centered approach’, including through existing local networks, is prioritized. The intended outcome of this being: “strengthened and expanded alert dissemination and feedback channels reaching all people with actionable information”. With 95% of the world covered by a mobile network, mobile is a favoured channel for communicating risk and offers real-time geolocated alert capabilities. The CAP (Common Alerting Protocol) is the recommended alert protocol and (as intended in the WMO action plan) and is becoming standardized across globe.

Through [previous research](#) we know that marginalised groups both in humanitarian contexts and globally, experience greater barriers to accessing and using mobile technology. For example, research

has highlighted that women, people with disabilities, older people, and people with lower socio-economic status are often at greater risk of digital exclusion, and would therefore be likely to be at risk of exclusion from risk communications delivered through mobile channels.

This research builds on previous work in digital exclusion to understand specific experiences of and barriers to mobile-enabled risk communications. Specifically, it seeks to understand both the demographic and the environmental barriers to receiving, interpreting and acting on risk communications. Understanding these barriers is the first step to building more inclusive risk communication systems. The research will additionally provide recommendations to improve existing systems within the research locations and draw lessons for risk communications systems more globally to help ensure that everyone has access to life saving early warnings and is empowered to take the necessary action.

The programme is supported by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), the GSMA, and its members.

### **Project objectives**

This research has four primary objectives:

1. Understand user experiences of risk communications [enabled](#) by mobile technologies in 3 locations and how these vary based on demographic and environmental factors. This includes barriers to receiving, accessing and acting upon information.
2. Work with communities to co-create solutions or improve existing risk communication processes/strategies to address the specific barriers in each location.
3. Raise awareness on the need for inclusive and localised approaches when designing EWS and risk communication programming.
4. Where possible, provide recommendations for providers globally on how to overcome barriers and make risk communications more inclusive.

### **Research questions**

**The overall research question for this work is, how inclusive are mobile-enabled risk communications and how can they be made more inclusive?** This can be further broken down into 4 sub-questions.

1. What channels and communication techniques have been used for communicating risk to communities affected by hazards and disasters and what is the role of mobile technology?
2. Who has been included and who has been excluded from previous risk communications? How does mobile technology enhance inclusion or reproduce exclusion?
3. What factors and barriers, both environmental (e.g. political context) and demographic, impact inclusivity and actionability of risk communications?
4. What lessons can be learned on how to make mobile enabled risk comms more inclusive and actionable? - including lessons from where there are already high levels of inclusivity.

## **Scope**

### **In Scope**

- Risk communications systems that include mobile channels
- Warnings and alerts for predicted shocks as well as the exchange of information on the nature, control and response to sudden onset shocks. This could include risk vulnerability, resilience strategies and preparedness.

### **Out of scope**

- People who are not impacted by humanitarian crises or potential humanitarian crises.
- Risk communications around slow-onset crises or development issues such as public health information

## **Locations**

It is expected that research will take place in three locations in South Africa. There is a chance that another country will be identified as a research location, in which case only two locations in South Africa would be included. Please cost and plan based on conducting the research in three locations in South Africa but please indicate where location will have a significant impact on budget, methodology or logistics management.

## **3. Methodology and high-level services and deliverables requirements**

Please note that the below can be amended in the proposal submitted to align with suppliers proposed methodology or process. The below has been outlined to give an idea of expected processes, outputs and methodologies.

It is suggested that this be a primarily qualitative study across the three research sites, drawing heavily from human-centred design methodologies. These highly participative methods will contribute to the ultimate research goals both of understanding users' experiences of risk communications systems as well as help to identify solutions to increase inclusivity. Centering the experiences and voices of end users themselves will be absolutely key in this work.

Together with the South African Red Cross, the GSMA will select and conduct the research in likely three locations in South Africa (exact locations to be confirmed). These locations have been selected based on the following criteria: (1) communities have previously been exposed to risk communications (especially where partner may have faced challenges in accessibility) (2) a diversity of risk factors (for sudden onset shocks) are present (3) mobile technology is involved in programming, and (4) [partner] has staff on the ground with time and enthusiasm for participation.

The supplier should demonstrate ability to conduct research in the locations, ideally through local researchers, and highlight any previous experience working with the communities identified.

To achieve the research goals outlined above, it is expected that there will be 4 main phases of research.

## 1) Inception report based on desk review and key informant interviews

Following a kick-off meeting to convene research partners, the supplier will begin the project by reviewing existing literature on inclusive risk communications (focusing on mobile-enabled channels) both in terms of best practice globally, as well as any literature available relating to the research locations. The latter includes any project materials supplied by partner. This desk review should be paired with key informant interviews (KIIs), including again representatives from leading global experts on the topic as well as national representatives in the two research locations. **Please provide costs for 15 key informant interviews but feel free to suggest alternative approaches and suggestions.**

**Output 1a:** Kick off meeting completed, and key informant interview guide submitted [July 2023]

At the conclusion of this phase of research, the supplier should produce an inception report to summarise existing literature, best practice, and the refined scope of this research. Additionally, the report should detail the refined approach for data collection. This includes the first draft of data collection tools, proposed processes (e.g., on COVID safety, enumerator training – if relevant, ethics protocols etc.). Partners will review tools and processes to provide comments and suggestions.

**Output 1b:** Inception report including (1) Introduction/Background (2) Research objectives and questions (3) Existing evidence – drawing from desk review and KIIs. [July 2023]

**Output 1c:** Based on feedback on the inception report supplier should develop a proposed research approach, including safety and ethics processes and plans for research logistics and permissions, as well as drafts of the data collection tools. [July/August 2023]

## 2) Qualitative data collection: user experiences of risk communications systems

The supplier is encouraged to think creatively about methods. However, GSMA strongly recommends a participative qualitative approach to explore with end users:

- Experiences of accessing risk communications through mobile channels and any barriers (e.g., Can the participant access the channel the messaging is disseminated through? Do they have a mobile phone and is it adequate to access messaging? Do participants have the digital literacy required?)
- Experiences of understanding messaging (e.g., Are communications in the appropriate language, level of technicality? Do users have sufficient literacy?)
- Experiences of actionability (e.g., What the user did/would do based on that message? Do they have appropriate knowledge and resources at their disposal to take action? Are available actions accessible to them?)

Considering that in the locations, SARCS has recently conducted risk communications programming, the supplier should investigate any recollected experiences of that programming, and its accessibility. However, given that it is unlikely all participants will have received that messaging, the supplier could additionally design an experiment to understand how a user would react if they did receive a warning or communication of risk like the one SARCS had recently sent in the area.

The methods that GSMA have been considering are individual in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and user journeys, to work with end users to map their experience from end-to-end. This will help researchers to assess the comprehensibility and accessibility of communications themselves as well as user's reactions or knowledge of actions to take based on those communications. However, as stated above, suppliers are encouraged to propose alternative methodologies.

To understand the experiences especially of marginalised communities, it is expected that marginalised groups (depending on context) should be over-sampled for. This could include, for example, older people, young people, people with disabilities, women, ethnic minorities, socio-economically marginalised groups, people living with HIV, etc. The exact groups will be selected based on local contexts.

**Please cost for approximately 20 participants in each location but please do suggest your preferred sample size and approach in your response.**

Additionally, documentation of the research process, including potentially high-quality digital photographs (where appropriate and in line with GSMA ethical and privacy considerations and local permissions), videos and documentation of materials produced should be included. The supplier will be responsible for providing any audio, video, photography equipment required (beyond what participants already own) in addition to workshop materials, if needed.

**Output 2:** During data collection, regular calls with key contacts among research partners will be held to review any last-minute changes that might be needed. GSMA staff will likely join for part of the data collection process.

At the conclusion of this initial design research, ***documentation of the qualitative research outputs*** should be submitted, including transcripts, photos of activities, signed consent forms, and full documentation of the research in addition to preliminary analysis. The format of this may vary depending on the methods chosen but could include a PowerPoint presentation outlining typical user journeys, social maps, descriptions of barriers faced etc. This should include preliminary findings. [August/September 2023]

### **3) Co-creation and ideation of solutions**

Following the qualitative data collection on user experiences, the supplier should work with users to ideate solutions to the barriers identified. Again, it is suggested to draw on human-centered design methodologies to conduct a workshop with users, but suppliers are encouraged to suggest a creative and participative approach. Ideally, this workshop would directly follow the qualitative research to (1) work with the same participants and (2) minimize travel costs. The exact contents of the workshop will be determined by research findings and identified barriers. Please cost for a one-day workshop but feel free to suggest alternatives.

**Output 3:** Following data collection, summaries of the outputs from the workshop should be documented and shared, along with any materials or photos from the workshop and any additional consent forms. This should include the topics discussed, activities conducted, and themes that emerged from discussions with participants. [August/September 2023]

### **4) Analysis and Final Report**

Following qualitative data collection and the co-creation workshop, the supplier will analyse findings and provide a full final report presenting findings. The exact format and contents will of course depend on findings, but it should draw on the entire lifecycle of the project, including findings from the inception report, users' experiences of risk communications in the locations, highlighting barriers, sharing any lessons identified, and presenting findings from the co-creation workshops. Ideally analysis will seek to identify trends or differences between the locations to share lessons on how to make risk communications systems more inclusive globally. Areas for additional research and analysis beyond the current research could also be identified. Depending on the research activities conducted, GSMA is also open to alternative final products including visualised user journey graphics, co-created video or photo content, etc.

**Output 4a:** Outline of final report including proposals for any additional (visual or multi-media) elements of the final deliverable followed by meeting with partners to discuss. [October 2023]

**Output 4b:** Final report including analysis and lessons. Please note it would be preferable to have time for one round of reviews by GSMA and IFRC of the draft report before the final draft is finalised. [November 2023]

## **5) Sharing research outputs with participants**

**Creating a plan to share outputs:** As a team, we place value on sharing research results back with communities who participated in the research. As such, a budget should be allocated to create a plan for a low cost, but participative way to communicate back research results to participants and gather feedback.

**Output 5:** Research participant dissemination. [November 2023]

## **4. Additional requirements**

The following elements are mandatory service requirements and processes through the research process.

### **Communication**

All communication, both written and verbal to the GSMA, to be conducted in English (including the translation of any documents that are required by local law in the markets that are created in local language). Additionally, this includes any documentation submitted as final deliverables to the GSMA, including transcripts and research materials. Suppliers should also demonstrate their ability (either through direct employment or via partners) to bring on highly skilled bilingual researchers in various contexts to deliver detailed qualitative testing and refinement of tools.

### **Transparency**

GSMA requires the appointed supplier to be fully transparent about local partner / fieldwork agencies they intend to use & GSMA has the power to veto selection.

### **Safeguarding**

As part of our commitment to ensuring all those involved in research and evaluation are safeguarded, the supplier is requested to provide information on their safeguarding approach / mitigating activities to ensure the safety and dignity of any vulnerable persons. A full safeguarding plan will be formulated together once a supplier is selected and integrated into the research tools and fieldwork plan.

### **Service availability**

GSMA M4H requires a named project manager and ideally requires response to emails within two working days. Any delays must be communicated in a timely manner. Any changes to the required services/deliverables must have prior written approval from the GSMA contract manager.

### **Project management requirements**

Regular weekly updates with the M4H project manager either at the GSMA London office or via video conference throughout the project. During the fieldwork M4H expects daily reports for the first three days of fieldwork and thereafter reports every 48 hours. GSMA will provide templates for the progress reports.

### **Ongoing support of deliverables**

It is expected that the successful agency will respond in a timely manner to GSMA and/or FCDO requests for clarification of the project activities and/or deliverables for up to four weeks after the final debrief.

### **Licenses**

The supplier will be responsible for ensuring all data collection is in line with local requirements and that they have all relevant permissions.

### **Allowances**

The supplier will be responsible for administering transport allowances and per diems for Red Cross staff and volunteers assisting with workshops, to be included in the budgeted costs for the project.

## **5. Request for Quotation**

Evaluations of proposals will consider the following elements. It is unlikely the GSMA will consider proposals that do not include all elements listed.

- 1) **Understanding of the brief:** Suppliers should outline their understanding of the requirements and the value they believe the results will have.
- 2) **Approach:** Suppliers should outline how they intend to deliver the project as specified above. This should include:
  - a) How you intend to meet the requirements of this document;
  - b) Suggestions for alternative/supplementary approaches to address the central objectives;
  - c) An indicative timeline for delivery and demonstration of capacity to meet this; and
  - d) Any dependencies on GSMA staff.
- 3) **Team and responsibilities:** The proposed team should be included with a short bio alongside proposed roles.
- 4) **Relevant experience:** Include examples of previous work which demonstrates experience where possible with:
  - a) Telecommunications &/or tech category experience;
  - b) Experience of working with marginalised and underserved communities (ideally in humanitarian contexts) and a proven understanding of how to work with this segment in an ethical manner;
  - c) Suppliers that have experience and knowledge of the humanitarian sector; and
  - d) Experience of participative qualitative methodologies. If the supplier has experience with human-centred design methodologies, please provide an example of that as well.
- 5) **Risks and mitigation strategies:** All RFQ responses should include how any potential risks may be mitigated, e.g., security risks, ethical considerations etc.
- 6) **Itemised quote:** Suppliers should provide a fully itemised quote. The GSMA default currency requirement for all proposals is 'UK Pounds Sterling'. It should include at a minimum a price for commissioning the project as described in Sections 2 and 3 of this document. Please note in those sections we have outlined estimated sample sizes and locations of research for costing purposes. If significant changes to budget will occur as a result of the backup locations listed in section 3, please indicate where and how those would impact the budget.
  - 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) A template can be found at the bottom of this document.

### RFQ timeline

The RFQ timeline below is subject to change at GSMA's sole discretion.

Time and Date	Action
May 19	RFQ Issued
May 25	Webinar for potential suppliers at 10am BST
May 26	Submit questions to GSMA by this date
May 30	Questions and answers circulated back to all Respondents
June 9	Cut off time and date for proposal to be received by GSMA
June 16	Top 2 suppliers invited to present their proposal (remote)
June 19	Estimated GSMA SoW assessment period and invitation to contract
July 7	Contract fully executed

*Note: Timeline is subject to change*

### GSMA Contact details

All correspondence and queries in relation to this RFQ must be emailed to:

Susanna Acland ([sacland@gsma.com](mailto:sacland@gsma.com)) ("GSMA contact")  
 Zoe Hamilton ([zhamilton@gsma.com](mailto:zhamilton@gsma.com)) ("GSMA contact")  
 Angela Nkonu ([ankonu@gsma.com](mailto:ankonu@gsma.com)) ("GSMA contract")

Queries are accepted in written form by email, and GSMA's responses will be copied to all respondents, including an anonymous version of the query. No queries will be answered outside of the timeframe specific, except in extraordinary circumstances within GSMA's sole discretion.

### **RFQ submission details**

Respondents should submit a full documentation package via email no later than 12 noon (GMT) June 9th. Electronic submission should not exceed more than 5 MB in size per email and should be sent to: [saclandl@gsma.com](mailto:saclandl@gsma.com); [zhamilton@gsma.com](mailto:zhamilton@gsma.com); [ankonu@gsma.com](mailto:ankonu@gsma.com). Acknowledgement of receipt of electronic submission will be sent by the next day of receipt before Close of Business. In case the Respondent encounters a problem in its electronic submission, please contact Angela Nkonu by telephone at +44 (0)7855 985 016. If, following submission of the tender, the information contained therein changes, please advise the GSMA Contacts immediately. Where proposals are incomplete or not supplied, they may not be considered for evaluation. By submitting a response, respondent agrees to respond to any other questions issued by GSMA in connection with this RFQ within the stated deadlines.

### **Milestone payment details**

For the avoidance of doubt, GSMA's payment terms are contained in the GSMA Standard Terms & Conditions ("T&Cs"), attached to the email containing the RFQ, and are sixty days from receipt of an undisputed invoice, which should be raised following acceptance of Services and/or Deliverables.

Please note, GSMA does not make advance payments prior to completion of the Services and Deliverables unless the payment requested is specifically traceable to purchase of items required to perform the Services or provide the Deliverables, which would otherwise be a loss for the Respondent. Any specific payment requirements must be notified as part of the RFQ response.

The Respondent's Total Price is inclusive of all costs, insurances, fees, costs, expenses, liabilities, obligations, risks, and all financial requirements for the performance of Services and provision of Deliverables. Any charge not stated in this Proposal, which extends above to the Total Price, is not permitted. Total Price is exclusive of VAT but inclusive of all other taxes.

### **Summary of proposed timeline and payment milestones**

Based on expected outputs outlined in Section 3, please find below the summary of proposed payment milestones to be made to the supplier upon delivery of outputs. The following will be amended based on the supplier's proposal.

<b>Proposed payment milestone</b>	<b>Description and corresponding output</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Milestone 1: Desk review,</b>	<b>1a)</b> Kick off meeting completed and key informant interview guide submitted	[July 2023]

Proposed payment milestone	Description and corresponding output	Date
<b>Klls &amp; Inception report</b>  June 2023	<b>1b)</b> Inception report including (1) Introduction/Background (2) Research objectives and questions (3) Existing evidence – drawing from desk review and Klls.	[July 2023]
	<b>1c)</b> Plans for fieldwork - based on feedback on the inception report supplier should develop a proposed research approach, including safety and ethics processes and plans for research logistics and permissions, as well as drafts of the data collection tools.	[July/August 2023]
<b>Milestone 2: Qualitative data collection</b>  August 2023	<b>2a)</b> Collection of qual data. Regular check-ins and documentation throughout the data collection process	[August/September 2023]
	<b>2b)</b> Documentation of the qualitative research outputs should be submitted, including transcripts, photos of activities, signed consent forms, and full documentation of the research in addition to preliminary analysis. The format of this may vary depending on the methods chosen but could include a PowerPoint presentation outlining typical user journeys, social maps, descriptions of barriers faced etc. This should include preliminary findings.	[August/September 2023]
<b>Milestone 3: Co-creation and ideation of solutions</b>  August 2023	<b>3a)</b> Conduct a workshop with users, using a participative approach.	[August/September 2023]
	<b>3b)</b> Summaries of the outputs from the workshop should be documented and shared, along with any materials or photos from the workshop and any additional consent forms. This should include the topics discussed, activities conducted, and themes that emerged from discussions with participants.	[August/September 2023]

Proposed payment milestone	Description and corresponding output	Date
<b>Milestone 4: Analysis and final report</b>  November 2023	<b>4a)</b> Outline of final report including proposals for any additional (visual or multi-media) elements of the final deliverable followed by meeting with partners to discuss.	[October 2023]
	<b>4b)</b> Final report	[November 2023]
<b>Milestone 5: Sharing research outputs with participants</b>  November 2023	<b>5a)</b> Strategy for sharing research outputs	[November 2023]
	<b>5b)</b> Research participant dissemination	[November 2023]

#### Itemised budget template

Please provide the total price and the breakdown by unit cost as per the table below.

Item/Title	Unit/Activity Description	Standard Base Rate	Discount Applied	Discounted Rate	Volume	Total Charge