



Healthcare awareness through Knowledge Sharing in the Democratic Republic of Congo

by [Pierre Omadjela](#) on 05/08/2013 02:03 AM CDT

Networking Services Used: Mobile Commerce

1. What problems are you hoping to solve?

Lack of access to healthcare and to the method of prevention against Malaria.

The Central Congo Episcopal area is one of the biggest in the United Methodist Church. It has three Annual Conferences with now 26 ecclesiastics' districts. It covers 5 provinces of the 11 that the Democratic Republic of Congo has.

The Communication in our Episcopal Area is very difficult as it is difficult to know what happened in another district or another annual conference. We come to know some events related to the healthcare or disasters two or three weeks after they have happened.

For some areas, we come to know what happened too late. This situation does not allow us to act on time and solve some of the situations, or save the life of those in trouble related to health care or Malaria which is our focus as we apply Imagine No Malaria Program of our church.

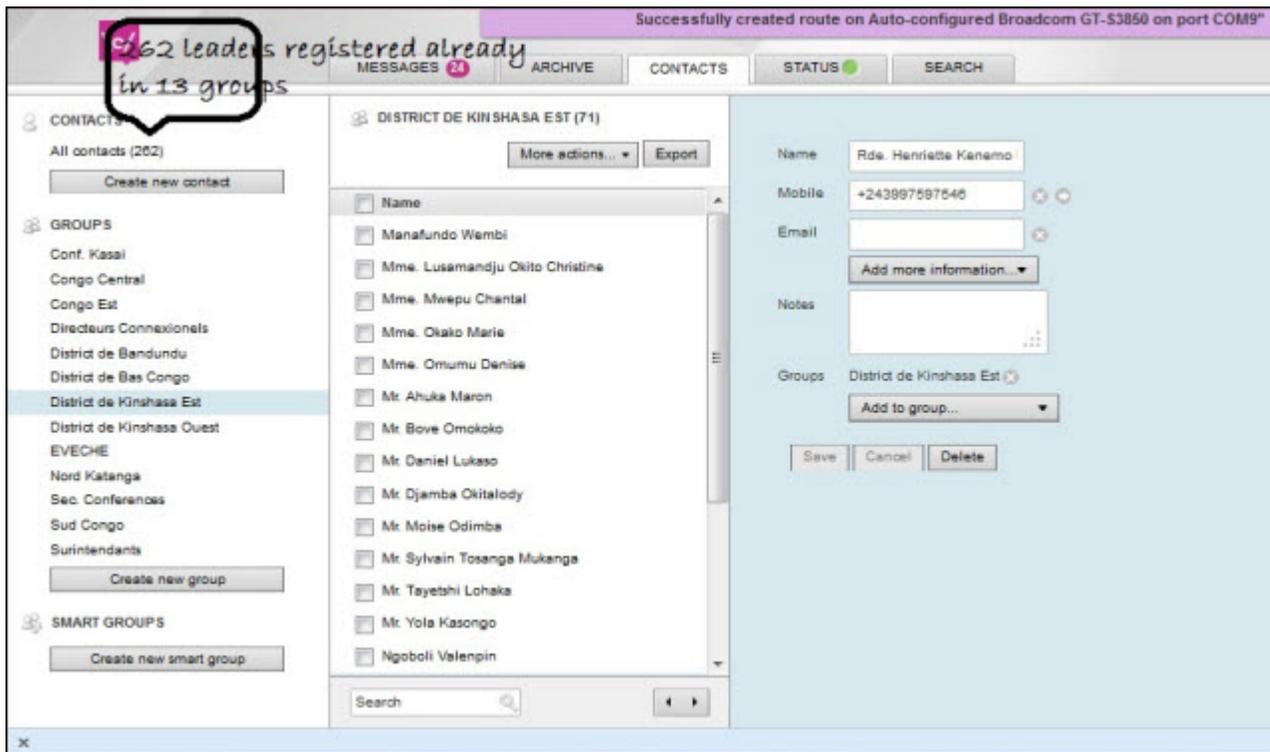
Since we were equipped with a machine in which was installed the SMS Frontline Program. We will use the FrontlineSMS from the health care coordination's office where all our services are connected. Our church has more than 100 hospitals in all the Democratic Republic of Congo coordinated by that office.

The communication office of the church helps to collect information from the General Hospitals of Reference, Clinics, Health Centers and Post of Health and send that information to the coordination of health works for prompt use and immediate act and vice-versa.

The Medical Coordinator uses this technology when he wants to communicate with our health care structures which are implanted in all the 11 provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In the Congregation Development area, our pastors and leaders of the church will be informed of new recommendations which should be applied in their respective places. Also, they will be informed of new developments made by the church in all level (General Conference, Central Conference, annual conferences, Districts and local churches). Again, they will know of the new ways of doing properly some of their activities in order to allow our church grow and grow again. This is how we will transform the world.

In short, we use the Frontline SMS in order to communicate well with our local churches, districts and annual conferences and health structures which are implemented in the country in order to keep them informed of the news and activities happening in our Episcopal Area and even outside our Episcopal Area so that people of God will not perish because of lack of knowledge.



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2. How has technology helped to solve this problem? What devices does your solution run on?"



With a population of over 75 million, the Democratic Republic of Congo is the nineteenth most population nation in the world, the fourth most population nation in Africa, as well as the most populous officially francophone country.

Malaria is a major health problem in the country, accounting for an estimated 40 percent of outpatient visits by children under five and 40 percent of the overall mortality in children under five. Implementation of large-scale malaria control activities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) faces serious challenges.

The country's health infrastructure is very weak, and it is estimated that only about 25 percent of the population has access to health facilities. An additional complicating factor is that external donor support of health activities in the DRC is fragmented geographically. With fiscal year (FY) 2012 funding, PMI will provide malaria prevention and treatment services to a total of 136 health zones in five provinces (West Kasai, East Kasai, South Kivu, Katanga, and Orientale Province). This represents 26 percent of all the 515 health zones in the country. Refer to President's Malaria Initiative for Democratic Republic of Congo (pdf) - http://www.pmi.gov/countries/profiles/drc_profile.pdf

The SMS Frontline Program has helped us in sensitization of the Congolese population to fight against Malaria. According to the result or statistics from our health centers, 50 % of cases received at the hospitals are sick of Malaria.

By using automated messages to mobile phones, we have increased the awareness about the ways to prevent from Malaria and we have already realized 5 % decrease from the work we are doing in teaching people ways to prevent against malaria in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

We think that is can be able to continue sensitizing the population we can again contribute to reduce the rate of death from malaria in the Democratic Republic of Congo and we will contribute to reduce malaria worldwide if we can have again two or three computers with SMS Frontline program in the country.

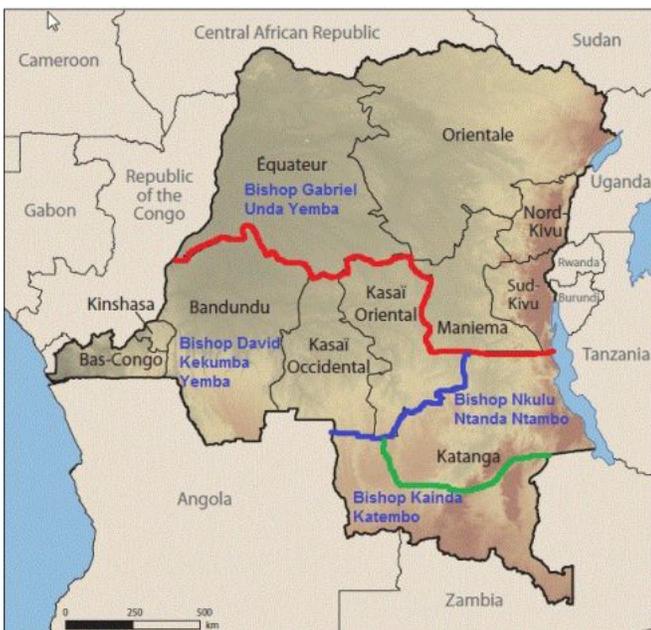
3. Where is this solution being used? What company provides the networking service in your area?

This program is implemented in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The United Methodist Church is one of the major churches of the country which more than 100 health centers which can be found in all the country.

The computers which we are using often come from the USA. For the network, we have airtel, Vodacom, orange and others network providers.

We have found that it is not only giving medicine that help in cases with malaria, but sensitization does more because with a clean environment there will be no mosquitoes and consequently no malaria.

4. Describe the current and future reach of your program. How can it be scaled to reach a wider audience?



Our actual or current reach is that with limited resources from the church, we have managed to have a computer with SMS Frontline program in order to serve more than 75 million population and we wish that if we can have three or four or more computers with SMS Frontline installed it them, we can be more efficient in the process which we have started in fighting against malaria beside the United Methodist Program called IMAGINE NO MALARIA which is a worldwide level. The United Methodist Church has distributed more than 1.2 million mosquito nets in the African region. In addition, the church operates 300 hospitals, clinics and health posts throughout Africa. But hundreds of thousands of mothers and children are still at risk and desperately need more nets, medicine and care. (<http://www.imagenomalaria.org/ShareTheLove/>)

Our future target is to do all our best and contribute to the fight against malaria and have a world without malaria. Not only malaria but all other communicable or noncommunicable diseases. So we would like to continue contributing with sensitization of the population against malaria.

5. If you are one of the winning entries, how will you use the award money?

As I will be one of the winning entries, I will use the award money to purchase other laptops and install SMS Frontline program in order to create four or five health areas in the country and after the DR Congo, and also other countries.