



VillageReach Awarded Grant to Improve Vaccine Delivery in Mozambique

Funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation will improve delivery capacity for vaccines through integrated solution of logistics, ICT and transportation services

SEATTLE, USA, June 18, 2013 – VillageReach, the Seattle-based social enterprise that increases access to quality healthcare for the most underserved communities, today announced it has been awarded a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to improve the delivery and management of vaccines in Mozambique. The two-year *Final 20 Project* targets more than 400 of the Mozambique Ministry of Health’s rural health centers that serve a population of approximately 13 million.

While the gains made in immunization coverage over the last three decades have been extraordinary, vaccine coverage rates have stalled at 80% globally. As a result, the immunization community must look for new models to enable immunization systems to reach all children, including the remaining one in five children – the final 20% – currently without access to lifesaving vaccines. For over a decade VillageReach has been developing, testing and refining innovations to improve the performance of in-country supply chains that have been proven in the field through various programs across sub-Saharan Africa. These innovations include:

- Deploying streamlined logistics systems to reduce the burden on frontline health workers, consolidate logistics tasks to dedicated teams of individuals, and integrate both supervision and data collection into overall system design;
- Creating and implementing electronic logistics management information systems (eLMIS) in low-resource environments to enable practical and reliable data collection and reporting that improves monitoring of commodity stock outs, cold chain performance, and other health system delivery performance metrics; and
- Leveraging private sector innovations and efficiencies in order to supply critical infrastructure services (communications, energy and transport) that both health systems and the private sector require.

The *Final 20 Project* will expand on this work to build a sustainable model of innovative supply chain design, appropriate approaches to data collection, and public-private partnerships to improve immunization supply chain performance in Mozambique and provide tools and research that can benefit other low-income countries looking to improve their immunization system performance. Project partners include the Mozambique Ministry of Health (*Ministério de Saúde*), the provincial government health departments (*Direcções Provincias de Saúde*) in Maputo, Gaza, Niassa, and Cabo Delgado provinces, Dr. Prashant Yadav of the Healthcare Research Initiative at William Davidson Institute — University of Michigan, and the HERMES Logistics Modeling Team at the University of Pittsburgh.

“VillageReach is increasingly being recognized for its demonstrated improvements in supply chain performance and efficiency, and the strategic deployment of specialized health personnel,” said Allen Wilcox, President at VillageReach. “Support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation provides us with the opportunity to highlight these innovations, consider further improvements, and document them for review and application in other countries seeking to raise the standards of healthcare delivery.”

About VillageReach

VillageReach is a non-profit social enterprise that extends the reach of healthcare services by creating dynamic delivery and information monitoring systems. Its mission is to save lives and improve health by increasing access to quality healthcare for the most underserved communities. See www.villagereach.org.

For more information concerning this release, please contact:

John Beale, john.beale@villagereach.org; tel: 206.755.0145