



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

UNHCR

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08 April 2010

Notre/Our code: DPSM/FICSS/LG/069/2010

Re: **Technical support of Google.org to the UNHCR mobile data collection project**

Dear Ms. Lamy,

On behalf of UNHCR, I wish to Google.org and in particular, you for the commitment shown in our joint mission to Goma in the Democratic Republic of Congo undertaken last month together with our colleague Edouard Legoupil. The UNHCR office in Goma has been very satisfied with the results, and the mission defined the next steps in exploring the use of this technology in UNHCR.

I learned with pleasure that Google would consider with interest a proposal from UNHCR in regard to the continued the testing of Android smartphones in the field as part of our efforts to pilot mobile data collection methods within UNHCR. Technical knowledge of partners such as Google is critical for UNHCR to be able to make use of current technologies but also take advantage of emerging opportunities.

I am submitting to you for your consideration the attached proposal: "*Testing of Android phones for mobile data collection in humanitarian operations, pilot activity within the FICSS mobile data collection project*". Should you agree to this proposal, we recommend that the equipment be acquired directly by Google and donated to UNHCR; this would permit a quick start of this project which would support activities in Goma scheduled to begin within the month.

I thank you in advance for your support and interest.



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Testing of Android phones for mobile data collection in humanitarian operations

A proposal to Google.org for the technical improvement of the collection platform in a real-life context in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo

1. Background

Following a joint exploratory mission of Google and UNHCR in March 2010 in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), it is recommended to launch a pilot project for the use of Android + Open Data Kit (ODK) as a platform for mobile data collection. The main condition to start quickly this pilot activity is to procure a range of pre-selected equipment. The recent movements of population in Eastern DRC bring specific needs which the Android platform could respond to.

2. Objectives

- a) Facilitate data collection in the upcoming registration exercise in Bukombo IDP Camp in Goma, DRC (to begin week of 12 April 2010). Current population of camp is approximately 8,000 persons, including 700 newly arrived households. Approximately 35 persons will be involved in the registration and will be exposed to the use of Android and ODK tools.
- b) To explore possibilities of using this technology in the current returnee activities to ensure better data sharing and coordination with WFP in regard to the provision of assistance to persons of concern and address basic issues surrounding identity management.
- c) Further the testing of site assessment forms initiated during the March joint mission.

3. Proposed activities

The activities of the pilot are:

1. Improvement of Open Data Kit through a registry of enhancement request / bug report;
2. Test of alternate Android-based application(s);
3. Configuration of the various data collection forms and of the database loading processes;
4. Test of different Android devices (hardware); and
5. Preparation of a deployment methodology so that the system can be reused easily in other UNHCR operations.

The non sensitive data (to be defined by DRC Operation) to be collected through this pilot project will be made available in the public domain.

4. Budget

The joint mission assessed the hardware requirements, which are:

1. Slide-out keyboard;
2. Wi-Fi / USB connection;
3. Camera with geotagging capability;
4. GPS & Compass; and
5. Quadriband GSM.

Three makers of Android phones currently comply with those specifications: 1 model from HTC and 2 models from Motorola, which costs are listed in the table below:

	Unit price	Quantity	Total price
HTC Dream ¹	\$350	8	\$2,800
Motorola CLIQ / Dext ²	\$450	8	\$3,600
Motorola Milestone / Droid ²	\$600	6	\$3,600
		22	\$10,000

UNHCR proposes that Google.org acquires the selected devices and donate them to UNHCR/FICSS. Those 22 phones will be added to the five already provided by Google.org during the joint mission.

The FICSS pilot project will last 6 months and is expected to start on the 1st of May 2010, or as soon as the equipment is configured and available in DRC.

5. Focal points

For UNHCR/FICSS: Mr. Edouard Legoupil, Associate Data management Officer, legoupil@unhcr.org

For UNHCR/UNOPS Data Centre: Mr. Jean-Laurent Martin, Operational Data Manager, JeanLM@unops.org

For Google.org: Ms. France Lamy, Program Manager, flamy@google.com

6. Expected outcomes

The testing activity will deliver to Goma Office:

1. facilitate data collection with improvement in rapid registration time, data homogeneity and data transfer to central database;
2. have trained UNCHR and Partners staff in the use and management of the data collection platform; and
3. create the central database from the synchronization of each Android device.

to UNHCR/FICSS:

1. determine which Android smartphone is more adapted to the work conditions;
2. either allow for the improvement of the ODK-Android interface and of its management, or determine if any alternative software is better adapted and more efficient; and
3. define the adequate technical environment to enlarge the array of data systems that can be supported and for replication in other operations.

to Google:

1. improve the ODK-Android interface;
2. develop a new expertise in humanitarian action; and
3. give access to public humanitarian data

¹ <http://www.htc.com/www/product/dream/overview.html>

² http://www.motorola.com/Consumers/US-EN/Consumer-Product-and-Services/ch.Mobile-Phones.compare?pMotProductsToCompare=131740_69073&productId=131740&productId=69073