



**Knowledge hub**  
-  
**Collection of best practices**

**Summary of the best practice**

1. Title of the best practice (e.g. name of policy, programme, project, etc.) \*

The GSMA Mobile Internet Skills Training Toolkit (MISTT)

2. Country or countries where the practice is implemented \*

MISTT has been implemented in 27 countries across Asia and sub-Saharan Africa including South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Guinea, Pakistan, Indonesia, Myanmar, Cambodia among many others.

3. Please select the **most relevant** Action Track(s) the best practice applies to \*

- Action Track 1. Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy schools
- Action Track 2. Learning and skills for life, work, and sustainable development
- Action Track 3. Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession
- Action Track 4. Digital learning and transformation
- Action Track 5. Financing of education

4. Implementation lead/partner organization(s) \*

The GSMA is the lead implementation partner supported by its mobile operator members.

5. Key words (5-15 words): Please add key descriptive words around aims, modalities, target groups etc. \*

Basic digital skills; Train the Trainer' approach; Toolkit available in PDF and video format.

6. What makes it a best practice? \*

MISTT is a best practice because of its catalytic impact whereby 21 million people have already been trained. The GSMA Mobile Internet Skills Training Toolkit (MISTT) is a set of free resources to teach people the basic skills they need to access and use mobile internet. It uses a 'train the trainer' approach and consists of short lessons available in PDF and video format that can be easily adapted to local needs and languages.

## Description of the best practice

### 7. Introduction (350-400 words)

This section should ideally provide the context of, and justification for, the practice and address the following issues:

- i) Which population was affected?
- ii) What was the problem that needed to be addressed?
- iii) Which approach was taken and what objectives were achieved? \*

Today there is still a “usage gap” of 3.2 billion people who live in an area covered by mobile broadband but are not online yet. The GSMA Consumer Survey consistently shows that in low- and middle-income countries, literacy and digital skills are the main factors limiting mobile internet use among those who are aware of it.

To help people with little or no mobile internet skills participate in an increasingly connected world and use mobile internet more safely, the GSMA has developed the Mobile Internet Skills Training Toolkit (MISTT), a set of train-the-trainer resources that can be used by mobile operators, governments, the development community and other interested parties. The toolkit consists of 12 lessons that can be adapted to local needs and languages, with modules that cover the basics of the internet (including online safety and data costs) and others that cover some of the most-used applications, such as Facebook, Google, Wikipedia and YouTube. For each module, the toolkit includes training guides for short two- to three-minute sessions when time is limited, and 45- to 60-minute in-depth interactive sessions.

In 2020, the “Accessibility Features” module was added to the toolkit following qualitative research on the mobile disability gap in Kenya and Bangladesh in 2019, which confirmed that digital skills were fundamental to the digital inclusion of persons with disabilities and that information on how to use accessibility features in relation to a user’s impairment was essential.

The MISTT was piloted in Bangladesh in 2017 and was found to have significant positive impact on driving internet usage among Banglalink customers. After the three-month pilot, training a total of 117,000 users, mobile internet use increased by 228 per cent among trained users. More recently, MISTT-based digital skills training substantially increased data use among MTN customers in Benin and Cameroon, an increase of 427 and 231 per cent, respectively, which translated into increased data revenue by 311 and 74 per cent, respectively.

To date, MISTT has been deployed in 27 countries and helped train over 21 million people across sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and Latin America.

## 8. Implementation (350-450 words)

Please describe the implementation modalities or processes, where possible in relation to:

- i) What are the main activities carried out?
- ii) When and where the activities were carried out (including the start date and whether it is ongoing)?
- iii) Who were the key implementation actors and collaborators? (civil society organizations, private sector, foundations, coalitions, networks etc.)?
- iv) What were the resources needed (budget and sources) for the implementation?

\*

The MISTT uses a “train the trainer” approach to build a rich body of knowledge from the bottom up. The toolkit has been developed for, and can be used by, mobile network operators (MNOs), NGOs, Development Organisations and Governments who want to provide training to improve people’s basic knowledge and understanding and use of the mobile internet.

In terms of implementation modalities, The GSMA conducts a workshop with key stakeholders which is then followed by a MISTT training session at the headquarters of a mobile network operator, who is the implementing partner. At this session, regional sales directors taught regional sales agents the full MISTT digital skills training methodology so that they could then train local agents at points of sale. The regional sales agents then returned to their respective regions to train local agents in urban, peri-urban and rural areas.

After receiving MISTT training from headquarters, sales agents train customers on a one-to-one basis, often over the counter in between serving other customers. Individuals are trained according to the MISTT modules which are: Wikipedia, Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube and Google, as well as an introductory module that covers the basics of the internet, including internet safety and costs.

The precise resources needed to launch a MISTT-based campaign vary greatly depending on the company or organisations’ goals and existing capacity. In the most successful MNO campaigns, budget was allocated to incentivise trainers by providing a commission for each customer trained. Additionally, these campaigns invested in marketing to promote the deals wrapped into the training, such as free mobile data. Despite these costs, most commercial campaigns had an ROI in excess of 150 per cent, making the efforts commercially sustainable and socially impactful.

## 9. Results – outputs and outcomes (250-350 words)

To the extent possible, please reply to the questions below:

- i) How was the practice identified as transformative? (e.g., impact on policies, impact on management processes, impact on delivery arrangements or education monitoring, impact on teachers, learners and beneficiary communities etc.);
- ii) What were the concrete results achieved with regard to outputs and outcomes?
- iii) Has an assessment of the practice been carried out? If yes, what were the results? \*

MISTT has been transformative due to the impact on learners, the beneficiary communities and the delivery arrangements. This was the first time that mobile sales agents across an intervention country were engaged in the delivery of digital skills training. No such mobile operator customer educating platform existed before the implementation of MISTT.

The partnership that GSMA fostered through MISTT including with MTN on the Data Smart campaign has had both substantial social and commercial impact. Since the pilot, MTN has scaled the campaign across eight countries and, as of April 2021, has trained over 18 million people. Since phase one of the campaign, MTN has expanded operations in the region to reach even more consumers in 2021 and accelerate digital inclusion.

Analysis of MTN transactional data showed a significant increase in data usage among customers who received the digital skills training, both in Cameroon and Benin. Following the pilot in Benin, the average monthly mobile internet use per trained customer increased from 15 MB to 79 MB over a four-month period, an increase of 427 per cent. Uptake was highest among smartphone users, with monthly data usage soaring from 57 MB to 322 MB, an increase of 465 per cent. These findings clearly show an enhanced mobile internet user experience for those with a smartphone. Similarly, data use among feature phone users more than tripled, indicating greater appreciation of the value of mobile internet.

To date, MISTT has been deployed in 27 countries and helped train over 21 million people across sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and Latin America. There have also been multiple positive impact assessments and case studies undertaken on MISTT, which can be found here:

<https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/resources/mobile-internet-skills-training-toolkit-banglalink-pilot-evaluation/> and here:

<https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/resources/mtn-data-smart-case-study/>.

## 10. Lessons learnt (300 words)

To the extent possible, please reply to the following questions:

- i) What were the key triggers for transformation?
- ii) What worked really well – what facilitated this?
- iii) What did not work – why did it not work? \*

Critical to the success of the Toolkit was undoubtedly the buy-in of partners, who found these resources to be a useful way to increase data revenue while also connecting underserved populations to the life changing benefits of the mobile internet. Equally important to the scalability of the Toolkit was the flexible nature of the resources, which allows trainers to select and provide training on the most relevant modules, along with expert guidance to help partners tailor the materials to their specific audience. This enabled a core set of resources to be widely used across divergent settings. As every market context is different, it is important for the Toolkit to be adapted to local needs. Although MISTT is already available in several languages, additional time and resources would be required from partners to translate the modules into additional local languages and adapt the content to make them most relevant to the people targeted in a new digital skills campaign.

## 11. Conclusions (250 words)

Please describe why may this intervention be considered a “best practice”. What recommendations can be made for those intending to adopt the documented “best practice” or how can it help people working on the same issue(s)? \*

Implementing MISTT can be considered a best practice because it creates catalytic impact and has the potential to be scaled by other stakeholders including, governments, NGOs and other mobile operators and private sector partners. The delivery and content of the modules are validated by GSMA and have a successful track record.

Recommendations for those intending to adopt this best practice include:

1. Localise content and training to make them more relevant and accessible. Meeting customers in their own community and showing them how mobile internet can meet their unique needs and interests is a critical part of the process. Concerns about how to control data usage (and thus costs) and stay safe online need to be addressed for customers to consider adopting data services.
2. Create a system to measure impact accurately. A system that can accurately monitor the uptake of training and evaluate the impact on customers’ data usage – automated where possible – improves efficiency and is essential to reaching scale. To better understand the needs of new mobile internet users, data needs to be disaggregated, including by gender, rural/urban residence and age.
3. Find the right incentive structure. Getting this right for both trainers and customers is a complex but important task. Effective incentives include monetary compensation for trainers and free data for customers (depending on regulation). Pilot tests can help to evaluate the level of compensation needed.
4. Define and identify target customers. Accurate customer segmentation improves the efficacy and efficiency of training. Examples include focusing on geographic areas that have recently been covered by mobile internet or pairing the training with an affordable handset offering.
5. Make it easier for people to remember and share what they learn. The impact of the training can increase exponentially if they share what they learned with peers.
6. Use all available channels and mediums. Incorporating IVR, SMS, web, radio, TV and social media can reinforce and amplify in-person engagement and provide an alternative when physical interaction is not possible.

## 12. Further reading

Please provide a list and URLs of key reference documents for additional information on the “best practice” for those who may be interested in knowing how the results benefited the beneficiary group/s. \*

- The GSMA MISTT <https://www.gsma.com/misttt>
- <https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/mistt/#case-studies>
- <https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/How-to-use-the-MISTT-English.pdf>
- <https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/resources/mtn-data-smart-case-study/>
- <https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/resources/multiplying-the-impact-of-mobile-internet-skills-training/>
- <https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/resources/developing-mobile-digital-skills-in-low-and-middle-income-countries/>