



# Key Trends from Round 2 of the GSMA Mobile for Humanitarian Innovation Fund

December 2018



The GSMA represents the interests of mobile operators worldwide, uniting more than 750 operators with over 350 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 the industry-leading MWC events held annually in Barcelona, Los Angeles and Shanghai, as well as the Mobile 360 Series of regional conferences.

For more information, please visit the GSMA corporate website at [www.gsma.com](http://www.gsma.com)

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## Mobile for Humanitarian Innovation



The GSMA Mobile for Humanitarian Innovation programme works to accelerate the delivery and impact of digital humanitarian assistance. This will be achieved by building a learning and research agenda to inform the future of digital humanitarian response, catalysing partnerships and innovation for new digital humanitarian services, advocating for enabling policy environments, monitoring and evaluating performance, disseminating insights and profiling achievements. The programme is supported by the UK Department for International Development.

This initiative is currently funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and supported by the GSMA and its members.

Learn more at [www.gsma.com/m4h](http://www.gsma.com/m4h)

Follow GSMA Mobile for Development on Twitter: [@GSMAM4d](https://twitter.com/GSMAM4d)

# Contents

|                                  |    |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Introduction                     | 4  |
| 1. Geographical Spread           | 6  |
| 2. Focus                         | 8  |
| 3. Partnerships                  | 8  |
| 4. Funding                       | 9  |
| 5. Themes                        | 10 |
| 6. Types of Innovation           | 12 |
| 7. Sustainable Development Goals | 13 |
| 8. Top Technologies              | 13 |
| 9. Trends from Round 1 & 2       | 14 |
| 10. GSMA Support                 | 15 |



It is estimated<sup>1</sup> that more than 135 million people around the world were in need of humanitarian assistance and protection in 2018. As the number of people affected by humanitarian crises increases and as these crises become more prolonged, humanitarian stakeholders are responding in new ways. Specifically, by partnering with the private sector, integrating innovative approaches and using mobile technology to increase accountability, efficiency and impact.

These changes are laying the foundation for a digital ecosystem for humanitarian assistance. This digital ecosystem has the potential to lead to more scalable solutions and platforms that can improve or enhance humanitarian outcomes, both for stakeholders and for crises-affected people. The [GSMA Mobile for Humanitarian \(M4H\) Innovation Fund](#) was launched to promote innovation in the use of mobile technology and catalyse shared value partnerships to address humanitarian challenges.

In July 2018, with support from the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the GSMA launched the second round of the M4H Innovation

Fund across four main regions – Asia Pacific, Latin America, Middle East & North Africa (MENA), and Sub-Saharan Africa. This second funding round sought to test new technical solutions, catalyse ideas to improve or transform institutional systems, and enable solutions to empower, assist or protect individuals and communities affected by complex emergencies and forced displacement. The Fund was especially interested in projects, implemented through collaborative partnerships, that will demonstrate long-term sustainability (i.e. commercial, technical, social, economic, environmental) beyond the lifespan of the grant.

### Criteria for selection

Between Round 1 and Round 2, the scope and eligibility criteria were adapted to align with the wider M4H thematic areas.

- For more information please view the [Terms and Conditions](#).
- Download the [Round 1 Key Trends Report](#)<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/GHO2018.PDF>

FIGURE 1

### Criteria for selection: Round 1

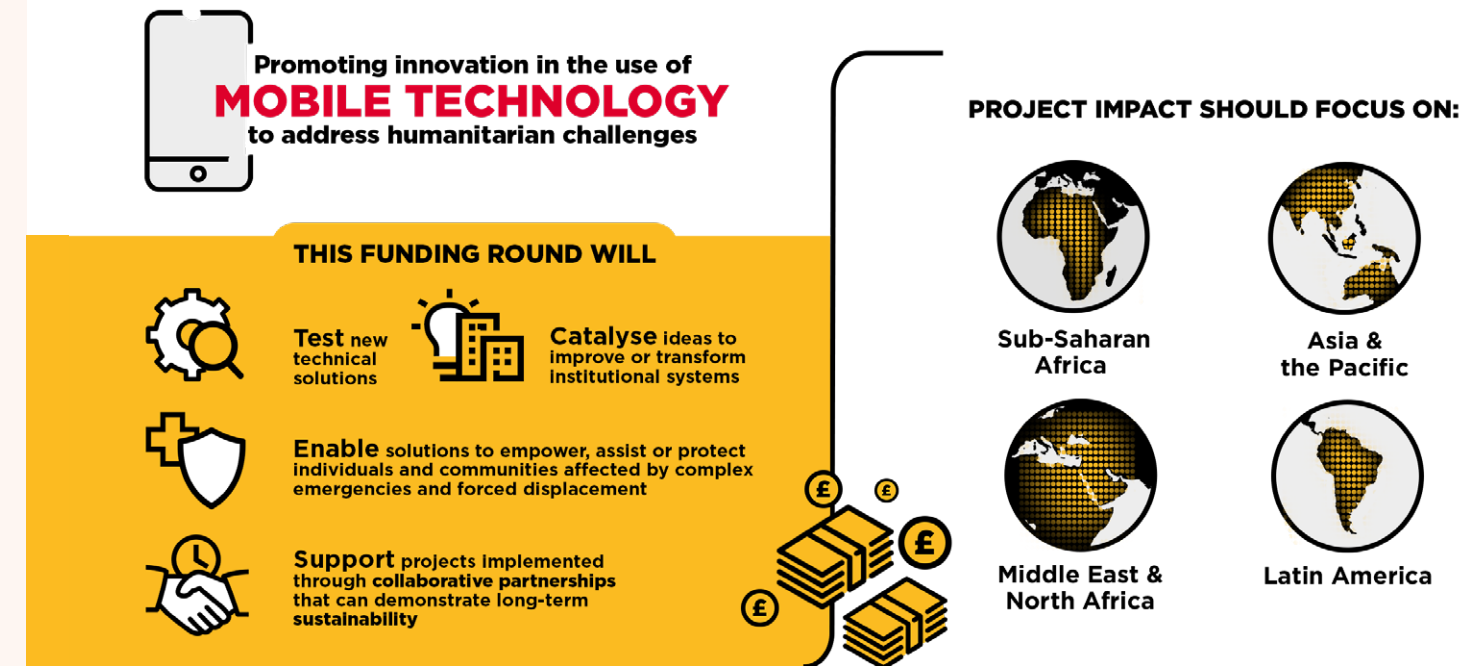
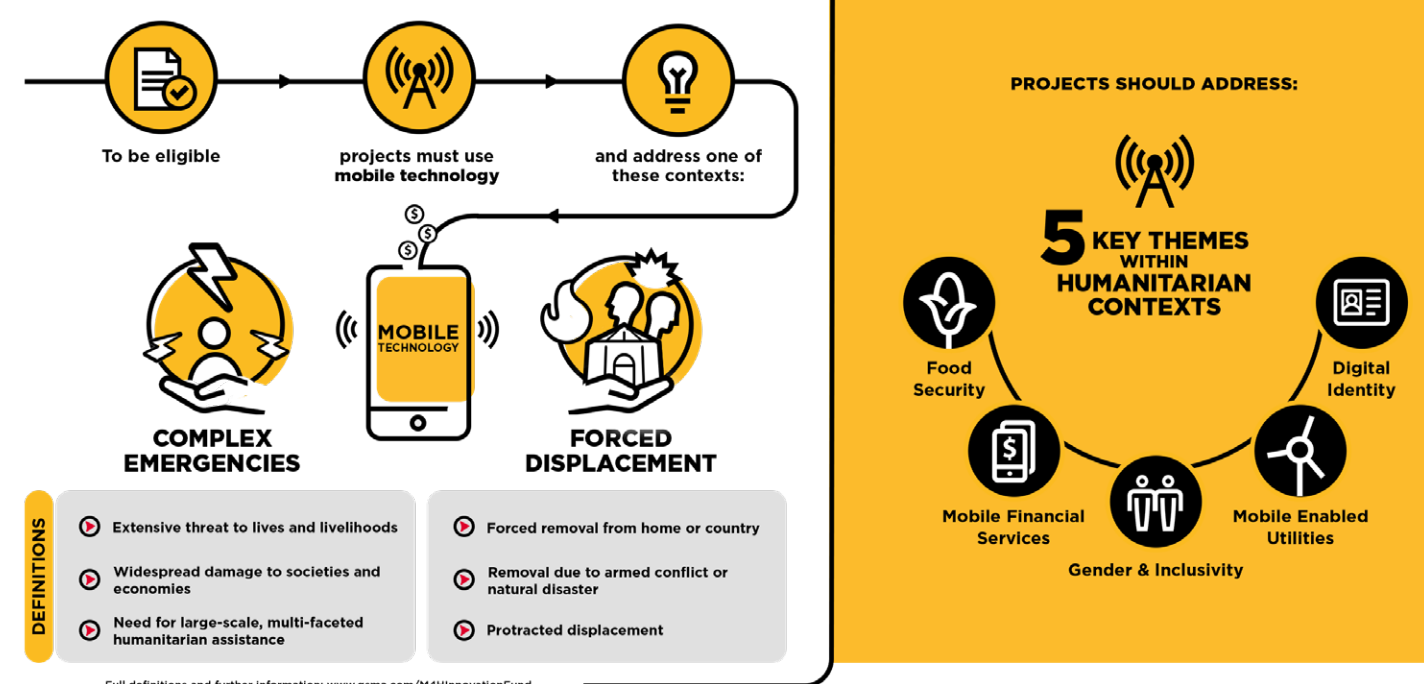


FIGURE 2

### Criteria for selection: Round 2



Full definitions and further information: [www.gsma.com/M4HInnovationFund](http://www.gsma.com/M4HInnovationFund)



# 1 Geographical Spread

In Round 1, the Fund received 264 applications for projects active in 77 countries in the four target regions.

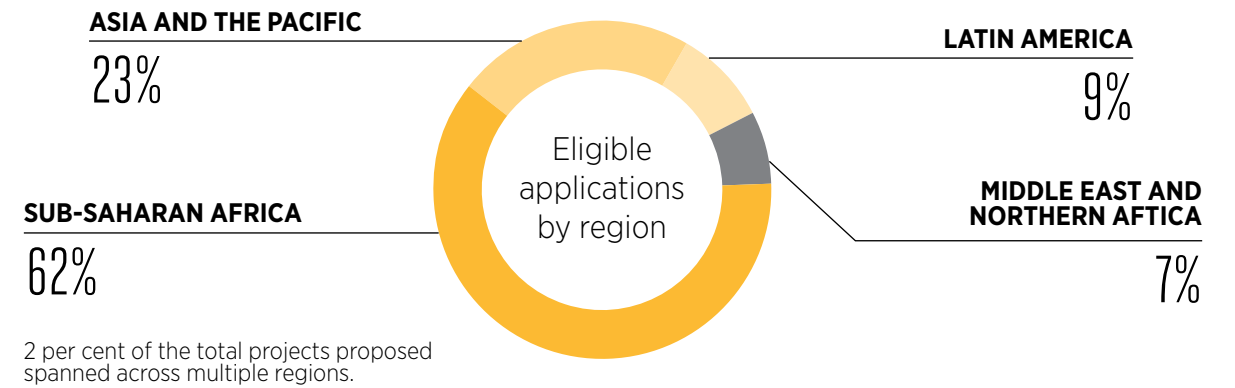
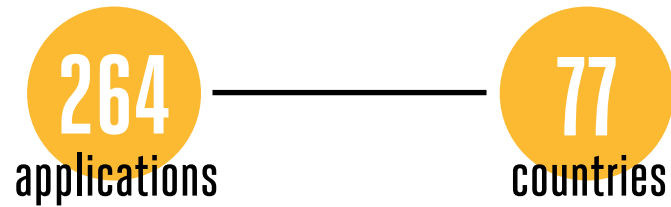
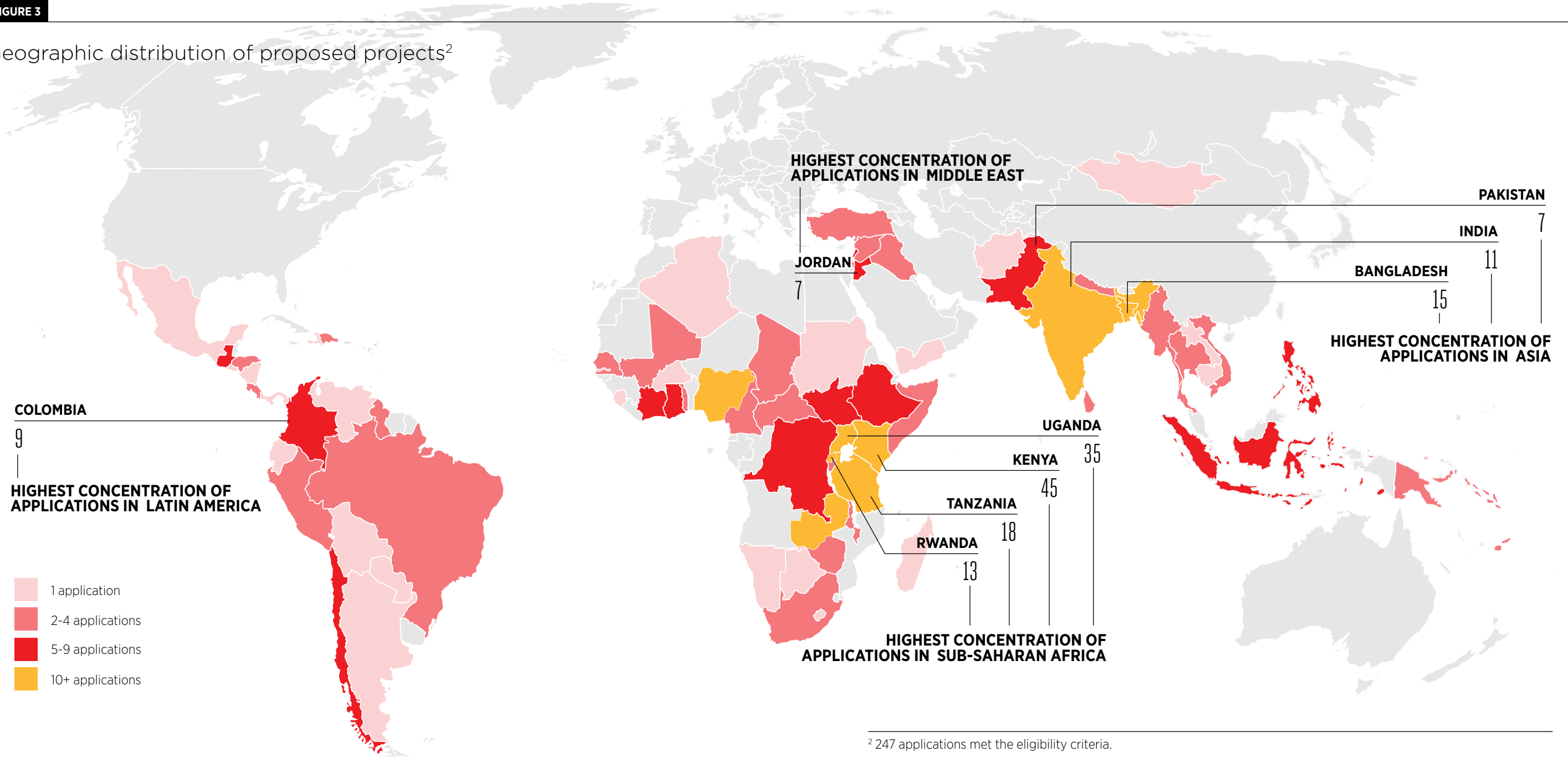


FIGURE 3

Geographic distribution of proposed projects<sup>2</sup>



<sup>2</sup> 247 applications met the eligibility criteria.



## 2 Focus

Round 2 of the Fund focuses on projects addressing two main challenges: **complex emergencies and forced displacement.**

### Complex Emergencies



Major humanitarian crisis of a multi-causal nature, which requires a multi-faceted, cross-sectoral, international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency.

Mobile technology offers avenues to improve preparedness to disaster and the quality of humanitarian assistance in affected areas.

### Forced Displacement



Forced removal of a person from his/her home or country, often due to armed conflict or natural disaster.

93% of refugees live in areas covered by 2G or 3G, which opens up the opportunity to leverage mobile technology to reach this population.

## 3 Partnerships

Applicants were required to apply as part of a collaboration between two or more organisations, and in total Round 2 received applications involving

NEARLY **700** DIFFERENT PARTNERS

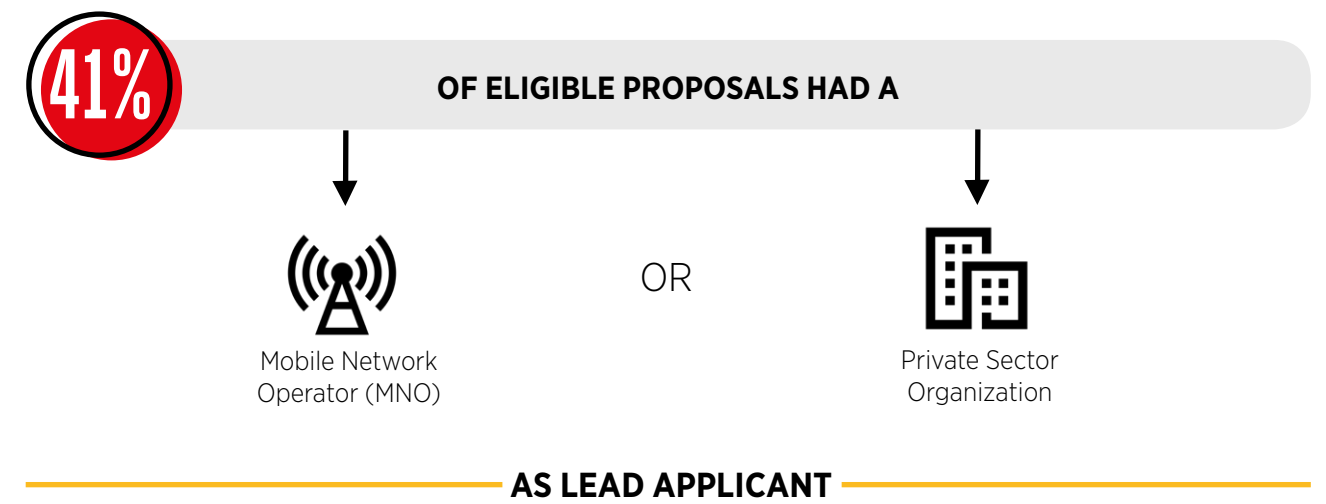
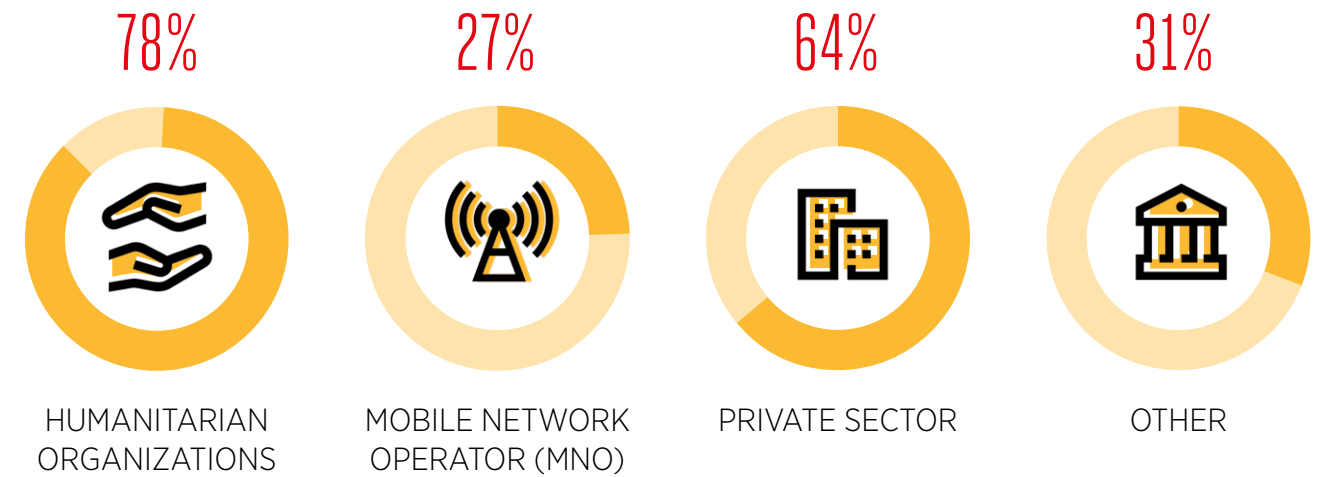
Humanitarian organisations were the most prolific (involved in 78 per cent of eligible applications) followed by private sector organisations, not including mobile operators (64 per cent). MNOs were represented in 27 per cent of eligible applications reflecting that, as mobile

technology has become increasingly widespread, MNOs are playing a fundamental role in the humanitarian space as technology enablers.

### Private sector involvement

This round received more than 180 applications involving a private sector partner (including MNOs). This was three quarters of applications (74 per cent). This demonstrates how non-traditional actors are stepping up to help accelerate the delivery of innovative digital humanitarian assistance.

Presence of various actors in eligible proposals



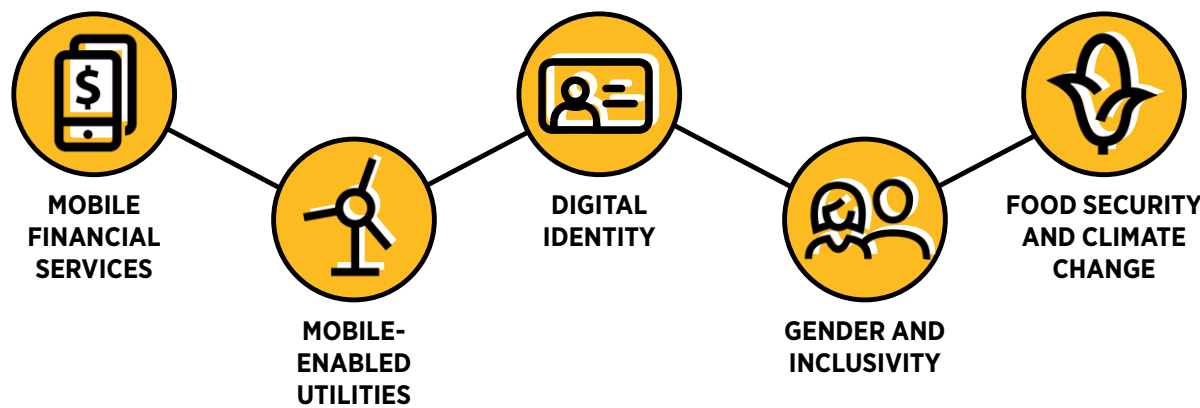
## 4 Funding

**£55.4M**

Total amount requested by all applicants. This highlights the need for increased resources devoted to innovating humanitarian response.

# 5 Themes

To accelerate the delivery and impact of digital humanitarian assistance, the M4H Innovation Fund called for applications that would target one or more of the M4H programme’s five core thematic focus areas. These are:



Applicants were asked to select their **PRIMARY THEMES** to target through the life-cycle of the grant project.

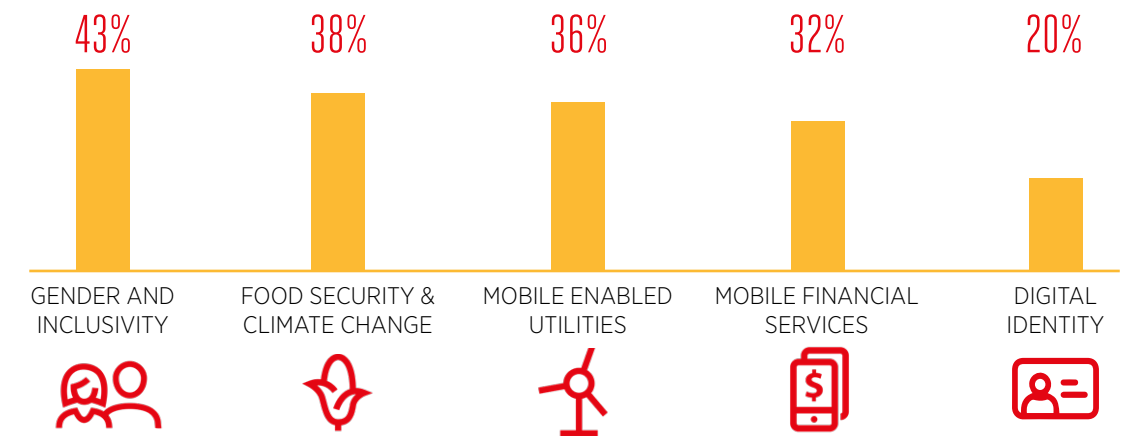


Each of the five received focus with **gender and inclusivity** as the most common theme.



FIGURE 4

Themes targeted across Round 2 applications



Eligible applications only.

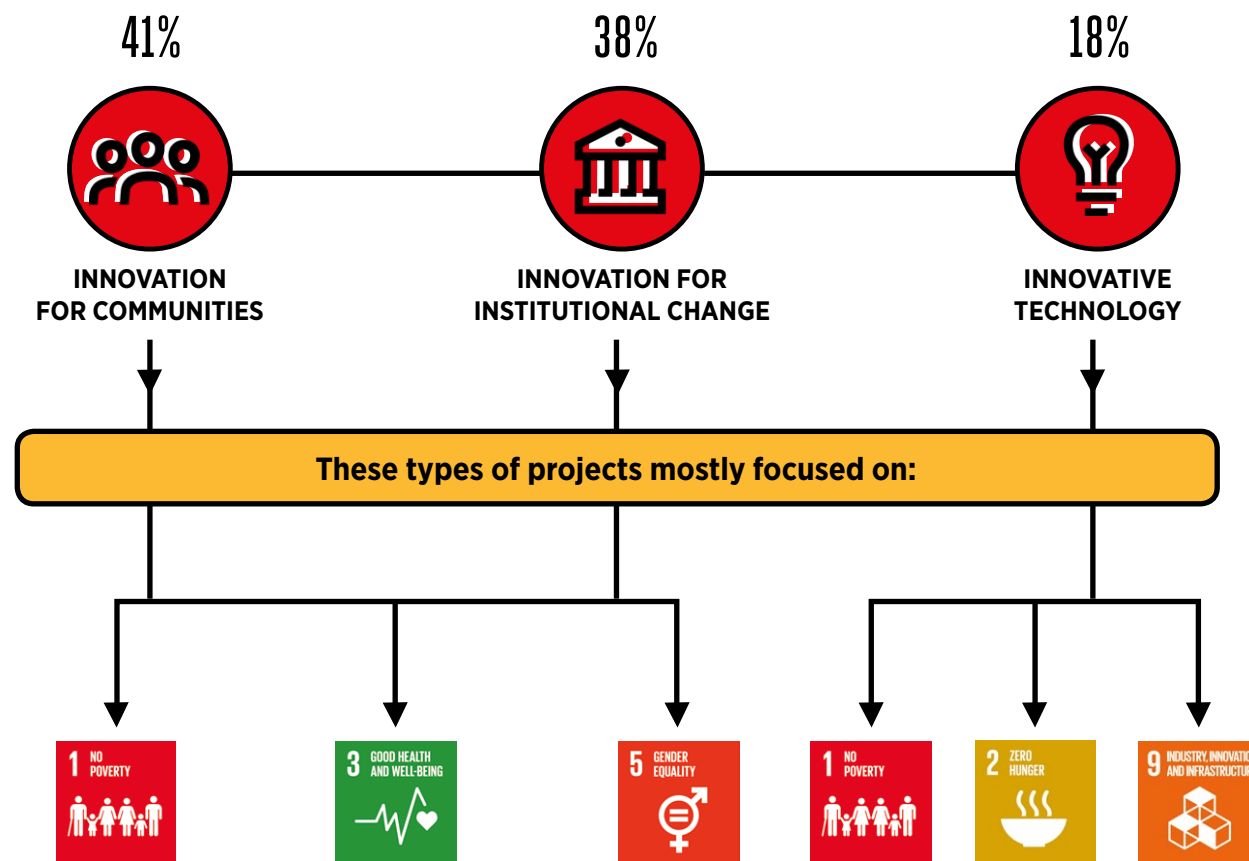
This finding demonstrates the need for holistic approaches to grant management, learning and data collection, as well as ensuring partnership structures reflect the plethora of challenges faced during complex emergencies and forced displacement. The M4H programme will continue to explore these thematic areas within humanitarian contexts with support from the wider GSMA Mobile for Development portfolio.

### Linkages with GSMA Mobile for Development

- **Mobile financial services:** [Mobile Money](#)
- **Mobile-enabled utilities:** [M4D Utilities](#)
- **Digital identity:** [Digital Identity](#)
- **Gender and inclusivity:** [Connected Women](#)
- **Climate change and food security:** [mAgri](#)

## 6 Types of Innovation

Applicants were asked to categorise their proposals as tackling one of the following innovation categories. Of all eligible concept notes, innovation for communities (user-driven innovation) was the most common (41 per cent).



## 7 Sustainable Development Goals

The mobile industry was the first global sector to commit to supporting the UN Sustainable Development goals<sup>3</sup> and since 2015 has demonstrated a positive impact across all 17 of the goals.

As part of this sector wide commitment, the M4H Innovation Fund asked applicants to identify which of the goals their projects would target.

**16/17 goals WERE TARGETED**

**MOST COMMON SDG TARGETS**



Round 2 specifically called for projects that strive to leverage partnerships and focus on developing sustainable models.

## 8 Top Technologies

Applicants more frequently identified uses of the following technology 'types' within their proposals:



### USSD

Unstructured Supplementary Service Data and SMS are the most targeted technologies among all applicants due to the ubiquity of 2G networks.



### Internet of Things

A growing number of projects are using smart devices such as pay-as-you-go solar home systems with embedded SIMs and metering to improve efficiency of water delivery.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gsma.com/betterfuture/aboutus>



## 9 Trends from Rounds 1 & 2

Whilst there are some notable differences between the two funding rounds to date, looking at the applications across both rounds reveals interesting trends.

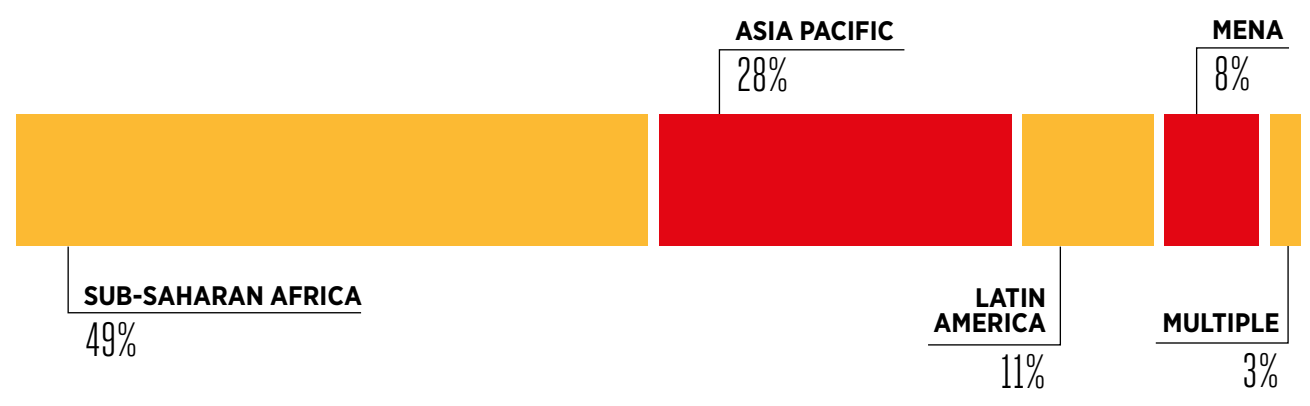
To date, the Fund has received a total of 538 applications from more than 1,400 partner organizations. MNOs were involved in up to 140 applications, which continues to demonstrate the critical role MNOs can play in delivering humanitarian assistance.



Applications across both rounds were relatively geographically diverse, with just under half of eligible applications focussed on Sub-Saharan Africa and more than a quarter on Asia Pacific.

FIGURE 5

Geographical spread of applications across Rounds 1 & 2



### ACROSS BOTH ROUND 1 & 2



Kenya was a focal country in 70 applications



MNOs were involved in 137 applications



To date applicants have requested approx. 100 million GBP from the Fund

## 10 GSMA Support

The support package for successful applicants includes:



**Grant funding** between 100 000 GBP and 300 000 GBP



**Mentoring** on the use of mobile technology



**Working groups and convenings** locally and globally



**Enhanced visibility** for grantees through the programme's insight publications, learnings through exchange with other grantees, and the programme's global networks and events

**A further funding round will be announced in 2019**

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For further information please visit  
the GSMA website at [www.gsma.com](http://www.gsma.com)

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