2009 Winner of the $100,000 Lemelson-MIT Award for Sustainability
Joel Selanikio: Notable Innovations and Applications

EpiSurveyor

With an initial grant from the World Bank, EpiSurveyor was piloted by the Ministry of Health of Kenya in conjunction with the World Health Organization, who now uses it as a standard for data collection. EpiSurveyor is a free, open source software package that enables health workers in developing countries to quickly and easily create data collection systems on mobile devices such as cell phones and PDAs—a process that previously required excessive amounts of paper and typically the services of expensive international consultants. EpiSurveyor leverages existing synergies between open source software, mobile technologies and networks, and an infrastructure that is steadily expanding in developing nations. The simplicity of EpiSurveyor empowers health workers and practitioners to become fully self-sufficient in programming, designing and deploying surveys in order to collect vital health data. EpiSurveyor is a sustainable, full cycle data collection tool, enabling efficient surveillance of disease outbreaks and monitoring of campaign success. Health workers in Kenya were the first to be trained in EpiSurveyor; in 2008 the Kenyan Ministry of Health budgeted more than $100,000 towards the purchase of PDAs and the training of nearly every health officer in the ministry.

DataDyne

DataDyne was co-founded in 2003 by physician, computer scientist, and public health worker, Joel Selanikio, formerly of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), with technologist Rose Donna, previously of the American Red Cross. Driven by the desire to improve the way health programs are implemented in developing countries, DataDyne works with sustainable mobile information technology including PDAs and other mobile devices. Its main product, created by Selanikio, is EpiSurveyor, an open source software package that simplifies data collection for public health workers.

United Nations (UN) Foundation-Vodafone Foundation Technology Partnership

The UN Foundation and Vodafone Foundation Technology Partnership strives to be the leading public-private alliance using strategic technology programs to strengthen the UN's humanitarian efforts worldwide. Created in October 2005, the Partnership has three core commitments: developing rapid response telecoms teams to aid disaster relief; developing health data systems that improve access to health data, helping to combat disease; and promoting research and initiatives using technology as an agent and tool for international development. Recognizing that mobile phones and the internet have the power to revolutionize access to information in the developing world, the UNF-VF Partnership has committed $1 million to support the development and deployment of EpiSurveyor since 2006.