



VillageReach Launches Open Source Logistics Platform to Improve Distribution Practices for Global Health Programs

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, April 20, 2010 -- VillageReach, the Seattle-based social enterprise that increases access to healthcare for remote, last mile communities, today announced the launch of openLMIS™, a new open source initiative to improve health system supply chains in low-income countries. VillageReach also announced the third release of its management information system, vrMIS, an integrated component of its logistics programs that improves cold chain performance and last mile distribution for a wide variety of medical commodities. VillageReach works with a variety of partners, including international aid agencies and corporations to improve public and private health systems in Africa and Asia.

“As a result of nearly ten years of global health program experience focused on supply and logistics, we have witnessed the need for greater integration of information systems and for these systems to operate in even the most challenging of physical environments,” said Allen Wilcox, president of VillageReach. “openLMIS provides the global health community with a common, open standards approach to ensure more people can be served reliably and at a lower cost.”

The openLMIS initiative enables increased investment and development for health distribution systems in developing countries, where the collection and reporting of information on inventories and distribution practices can be difficult. With multiple organizations responsible for delivering vaccines, medicines and medical equipment from arrival ports through to individual rural health centers, interoperability of information systems managed by these organizations can be a challenge. The results are considerable shortages and waste, with significant impact on community health: as many as 2.4 million children die annually without access to disease-preventable vaccines. openLMIS specifically addresses these gaps in coordination through an open standards approach to facilitate compatibility of information systems. Details of the openLMIS initiative are available at www.openlmis.org.

vrMIS, supporting VillageReach’s health development programs, enables health systems to efficiently monitor and analyze data to ensure optimal distribution. Designed for operating environments with varying levels of communications infrastructure, vrMIS allows data to be entered and reported through a convenient and intuitive web interface when Internet connectivity is available. For greater versatility, data can also be uploaded via SMS and smartphone devices or entered and stored offline when communications networks are not accessible, and then securely uploaded once connectivity is re-established. vrMIS is scheduled for deployment in programs starting in May 2010. Additional information is available at Learn More/Reports and Publications at www.villagereach.org.

About VillageReach

VillageReach is a non-profit social enterprise that extends the reach of conventional healthcare services to remote, underserved communities by creating dynamic delivery and information monitoring systems. Its mission is to save lives and improve well-being in developing countries by increasing last-mile access to healthcare and investing in social businesses that address gaps in community infrastructure. VillageReach has been given the highest-possible charity rating by GiveWell. See www.givewell.net.

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