Making Tech for Good Work on the Ground: 5 Strategic Pathways

A broad set of organizations (such as philanthropic foundations, impact-oriented accelerators, and others) aim to scale technology for good to harder-to-reach communities. Such communities might include lower-income households in emerging markets. Bridging the gap between innovation and practical impact is crucial to ensure that technology designed for good reaches these communities.

From leveraging market opportunities to innovative finance mechanisms, here are five strategies to help organizations scale impactful tech solutions on the ground. They are accompanied by a few examples we have selected as illustration, amongst the many other approaches and solutions that exist in this dynamic space.

Capitalize on market shifts

Monitor and adapt to regulatory, legal, and societal changes to unlock opportunities for scaling tech solutions.
- At a time where health systems were strained and not reaching those who needed it, Telehealth app Doctolib rapidly scaled virtual medical consultations in France by taking advantage of recent policy reforms.

Harness ecosystems to solve problems

Create enabling environments with supportive policies, partnerships, and infrastructure for seamless tech integration.
- UCL-Ventura CPAP scaled respiratory devices during COVID-19 by using open-source designs and regulatory reforms.

Leverage existing infrastructure and trust networks

Build on already trusted systems and accessible technology to achieve rapid scale.
- M-PESA in Kenya and Tanzania used existing Unstructured Supplementary Service Data/SIM Application Toolkit (USSD/STK) technology to deploy e-payment services, registering 20% of Kenyans within two years.

Leverage alternative data approaches

Use innovative data sources to bridge gaps in data-scarce environments, improving decision-making and reducing costs.
- Moove leveraged proprietary performance data to underwrite vehicle financing for underserved drivers in Africa and the Middle East.

Utilize fit-for-purpose finance mechanisms

Adopt innovative financial models like advance market commitments (AMCs) to reduce investor risk and ensure demand.
- Frontier Climate supported scaling of climate technologies through guaranteed carbon removal credit purchases.

By applying these strategies, organizations can transform tech innovations into scalable solutions that address real-world challenges in underserved communities.

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