

YourStoryTeller 2.0 : An Open Source Interoperable Platform for Building and Sharing Talking Comics on Critical Health Issues for Lower Literate Communities to build Healthy Behaviors (<http://www.YourStoryTeller.org>)

Submitted by Hilmi Quraishi (ZMQ Development) on January 19, 2018 - 4:19am

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Proposal Status: Out of Scope

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

<http://www.YourStoryTeller.org>

Rational:

Storytelling is an ancient art, with the earliest form of storytelling being oral, combined with gestures and expressions. It has been especially popular in low literacy communities. With the emergence of mass media, digital story telling is getting popular. It started as one-way communication like mass TV or media campaigns to a two-way participatory story-telling where interactive discussion is initiated post the story. Storytelling is a proven methodology for inculcating sustainable behaviors. It has shown a unique capacity for raising awareness among large numbers of people on critical social issues and motivating them to adopt new behaviors. Everyone has a story to tell. But there are billions of people in the world whose stories are never told and never heard by people. These stories determine the cause of their state of life. Without knowing their stories we neither can understand their problems nor provide solutions to their problems.

Objective:

ZMQ has created a platform called YourStoryTeller (YST) which produces and disseminates short and impactful digital animated stories on critical social issues on click of a button. The stories are produced in multi-lingual mode with text and voice.

YourStoryTeller will tell the stories of the poorest of the poor, unreached and disconnected; people who are suffering from diseases with special focus on pre-natal care, immunization, new-born care, danger signs in infants, menstrual hygiene, WASH, adolescent reproductive and sexual health; Communicable diseases like Tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, Leprosy, Polio, Malaria, Debgue; Diseases born due to climate change; Non-communicable diseases like Diabetes, Hypertension, Cardiac, Stroke and Mental Health. YST will focus on these topics. There will also be some inspiring stories, how some of them have overcome these barriers and emerged as champions. This will give us ideas to take right path and design right solutions for them. This will also open the eyes of the policy makers, common man and build empathy. These stories will give directions to solution designers, why and how to tackle these social problem.

YourStoryTeller is an attempt to tell the stories these billions of people which will determine (tell us) the root causes of their problems and help us finding solutions and empowering them and others. And for these communities themselves, these stories work as best practices which can be shared within themselves to learn and bring in sustainable ways to the change their lives.

The stories produced on YourStoryTeller channel have 4-6 scenarios, are animated with local text and local voice-over. It has been evidenced that short animated stories creates a greater impact on the minds of the users. Researchers from the Statistic Brain Research Institute, USA have found that the average human attention span has dropped by 33% since the year 2000, and the average length watched of a single internet video is 2.7 minutes.

We will also tell the success stories of the programs which have impacted the ground. We will tell the baseline stories, impact stories, and inspiring stories of those people who have fought and overcome the challenges. We believe that the problems can be solved, but it needs right kind of solutions at the right time.

Pilot & Usability:

ZMQ Story Channel comprises of more than two dozen stories developed by ZMQ on various social issues including health. Currently the channel is producing impactful stories on women empowerment. Soon, more social topics will be included. We are planning to release 1 story per week. This is going to be an ever growing story channel with inspirational stories on various social themes. The stories on ZMQ Story Channel are promoted by ZMQ through various social media channels, newspapers and other innovative ways like metro campaigns, college fairs etc.

Various YST Modes:

YST works in two modes. One can use YST as it is and start using the platform, using the resources and publishing the stories which will appear on their mobile phones. Another way is to create dedicated channels which are customized as per the specific e projects and used in the exiting apps of other programs by passing by the APIs.

COLLABORATION:

Lead by Mr. Hilmi Quraishi (Ashoka Fellow) and Co-Founder ZMQ Development with 18 years of experience in ICT4D. Along with Hilmi Quraishi, we have a team of technology developers, designers, social workers, communication for development experts, CHWs, volunteers and technology lead. We propose to work with various health departments in 4 countries where we already worked on MIRA and have connection with the Ministries and the CHWs. They are like: State Health Mission Haryana, India; Ministry of Health, Uganda; SEHAT Program under the Ministry of Public Health Afghanistan; and Rwanda Bio-medical Center, Ministry of Health, Rwanda. We will engage the community health worker there. Besides, we will also work with local grass-root NGOs and Self Help Groups to work in the local communities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

ZMQ has a mobile platform called **MIRA** which is an integrated mobile phone channel which provides high quality, consistent health communication tools to rural women and connects them with nodal health service delivery systems. The MIRA channel is designed for mobile phones in low-resource settings. The mobile platform has multiple components (channels), on issues related to Pre-natal Care, Child Immunization, Newborn Care, Family Planning and Adolescent Health using the **RMNCH+A** approach. Information is delivered through interactive tools by creating awareness on critical health issues, building knowledge & timely connecting with the public health services.

We plan to ass the digital stories in the existing networks of MIRA in India, Uganda, Afghanistan and Rwanda; and also plan to replicate / scale with other partners to integrate in their programs as an impactful channel for effective behaviour change communication. MIRA digital stories will address the challenges of lack of awareness about pre-natal and post-natal Care among rural women leading to low demand of services during the course of pregnancy. The project has developed culturally centric digital animated stories on mobile phones on critical issues related pre-natal and new born care, thus inculcating healthy behaviors and demand of services for pregnant women, and is improving health seeking behaviours and increase demand for services.

The project is based on using culture-centric health-promotion model. Sustained educational entertainment is a proven methodology for inculcating healthy behaviors. The proposed project is seeking seed funding for developing contextual digital animated stories on mobile phones, which will be tested with pregnant women to find the efficacy of the stories in building healthy behaviours and increasing the demand of services. At the end of 1-year time frame, we would have working stories ready, implemented and validated. It will take 4 months to develop and 8 months to implement with the MIRA workers in India, and later in Uganda, Afghanistan and Rwanda. In last 1month, we will

also do Monitoring and Evaluation.

Establishing mobile digital stories as new health messaging and behavior change tool will catalyze the use of this approach for further scale-up. Moreover, the mobile phone delivery of content will ensure large audiences and quick scale-up. The success of proposed project will help in scaling it both horizontally and vertically. The project can be scaled for other regions of the world where there is lack of access to quality content on MCH, and will also help in scaling digital storytelling for other health and development related issues. We are now replicating this channel in Afghanistan, Uganda and Rwanda, which provides weekly information to pregnant women through mobile phones. These digital stories are now being integrated on MIRA Channel for pregnant women in Afghanistan, Uganda and Rwanda.

Proposed Solution

The main objective is to build the capacity of grass-root communities and inculcate healthy behaviours using YourStoryTeller (YST) for their improved health, health of their families and overall society. Also, the stories will serve as a knowledge resource to researchers, policymakers, health sector workers and providers to get insight into issue of the local communities for building better health tools and solutions.

Technical Features:

YourStoryTeller comprises of 4 components:

1. YourStoryTelling (YST) Authoring Platform: It is an open source platform designed to create digital stories in quick-time in a very cost-effective manner. The key features of the platform are its ready-made characters, localized backgrounds, audio clips, sound effects etc. to produce quality stories for contextual settings with minimum efforts. The platform also provides opportunity to crowd source translations for the stories. In YST platform, there is a huge repository of content and material like characters, backgrounds, voice etc. which can be dragged and dropped to create stories. The user can also upload their additional icons, graphics, and characters etc. which become part of the already existing library or repository. This enables any user who is making a story use all the available resources in their story.

2. YourStoryTelling (YST) Mobile Channel / App: There is a special mobile app developed for Android, IOS and Windows called YST Mobile App. The front of the mobile App can be designed as per the need of the project. All the stories developed on the YST Authoring Platform appear on the mobile App. A single mobile app is installed on the phone. Any story developed on the YST Platform gets updated on the Mobile App automatically. The App also provides the detailed analytics about the usage and uptake of the stories, responses and also their behaviors, before playing the story and after playing the story, which is based on the pre-test and post-test questionnaire in the YST mobile App. Using the YST, at the end of each story, the user is asked to respond to a question related to the social message of the story. The response is recorded which is used to motivate the users and evaluate their behavior change. The data of all such users are collated and presented as Analytics.

3. YourStoryTelling (YST) Labs: We have designed a social methodology to create stories which are outsourced from the communities. We conduct what we call the YST Labs in the communities and work with the local communities to create social relevant stories based on critical health issues. They are produced on papers and then translated digitally.

4. YourStoryTelling (YST) Clubs: We have designed a social strategy to disseminate these stories both through social media like WhatsApp, Facebook and YouTube. Apart from this, train and create dedicated story-tellers who are provided a discussion guide on specific health topics based on the stories. These YST storytellers go on the ground and disseminate stories in the communities like schools, village-level communities, health centers etc. and also work with school teachers, community health workers and village volunteers by creating peer educators who further train the communities. All the data produced through the YST App is captured and provide as data analytics.

Technology:

The technology of is an open source technology. YST platform has been developed in PHP with MySQL. YST Apps are developed in native which are supported on Android, iOS and Window. Under the YST 2.0; they are available Opensource.

By:

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