

Ericsson, Grundfos launch drinking water 'ATMs'

Scandinavian company, Grundfos, have come with a solution that will improve access and payments for drinking water. The collaboration ensures easy connection of mobile wallet providers and water service providers, to simplify access for the end consumer.



It involves the Ericsson M-Commerce Interconnect that provides a global payments hub for mobile payment services, and the Grundfos AQtap, a water ATM that dispenses water and supports sustainable water management. The solution is expected to drive more efficient revenue collection with reduced cash management risks and overhead costs, and is deployed this week in Kenya powering selected water kiosks operated in Makueni county implemented by World Vision UK and World Vision Kenya, in partnership.

Peter Todbjerg Hansen, managing director of Grundfos Lifelink says: “This is a perfect example of two global corporations integrating their technologies to offer a complete water ATM solution previously unknown to the world. It is now possible to pay for water with mobile money, and water revenue collection is safe and automated.”

Not least the revenue collection plays an important part in securing reliable access to drinking water, as water supply points have been known to fail due to lack of funds, and capacity for operations and maintenance. Furthermore transparency and control of water price are critical to sustainable and pro-poor water supply services.

Grundfos addresses this with automated and connected water kiosks, also known as ‘water ATMs’, that offer an integrated solution for dispensing and remotely managing water supply points in both rural and urban areas. The Ericsson M-Commerce Interconnect enables mobile wallet service providers globally to add their connected water kiosks as a new consumer utility service in their payments acceptance portfolio thereby helping to drive cashless transactions and usage of the mobile wallet.

Peter Heuman, head of M-Commerce at Ericsson says: “The work that Ericsson is doing with Grundfos is crucial to reducing the cost and deployment times of these innovative ATMs that will deliver a more reliable water supply. It simplifies the payment process by taking cash out of the equation and our solution removes the need for water service providers to integrate with every mobile wallet provider used by people in the

country.

“With Ericsson M-Commerce Interconnect, any mobile wallet service from any service provider in any region can be used to provide payment. Enabling access to water will support social and financial inclusion, and enable the sustainable development of local communities, potentially impacting millions of people. This is what we mean by ‘Technology for Good’.”

The scope of the collaboration is global, and is especially relevant in developing countries, where water service providers constantly strive to improve the efficiency and financial viability of water projects for better access to financing of water infrastructure maintenance and expansion.

“With the AQtap water ATM and its revenue collection platform powered by mobile payment, our innovation can play a part in removing some of the key pain points around how water is paid for and revenue streams secured. This enables us to support water service providers in supplying citizens with sustainable access to water,” concludes Todbjerg Hansen.

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