The Grameen Foundation's AppLab Initiative aims to develop mobile phone applications and services that allow people to access information on important topics. Gamos was commissioned by the Grameen Foundation to conduct needs assessment research in Uganda in order to inform the design of these mobile phone applications and services.

Gamos collected quantitative data from over 400 mobile phone users across Uganda in order to assess information needs, current phone use, information delivery preferences and the perceived value of mobile phone applications. Desk research and stakeholder interviews were also carried out and the study report was produced in collaboration with members of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS). The findings from this study have now guided the design of several AppLab projects, which are providing appropriate, useful and relevant services to rural communities in Uganda.

Findings from the Gamos needs assesment research include:

- There is a strong demand for agricultural and health information among the rural community. HIV/AIDS information was given the highest priority and agricultural information was more important to poorer individuals.
- Satisfaction for information provided by existing mechanisms (e.g. radio) was low for the issues of identifying fake drugs, introducing modern agricultural ideas, getting agricultural advice and learning about first aid, disease prevention and treatment. Therefore, people might be inclined to use mobile phone services to get information on these issues.
- People expressed a desire to use mobile phone applications to contact doctors or support groups and to get market prices of agricultural products at local markets.
- Among rural communities, use of public phones is almost exclusively restricted to manned phones, unmanned booth use is rare.
- Where there is a tangible cost benefit, it is likely that the poor will pay for a service, as the mobile market has demonstrated. However, the poor are particularly reluctant to pay for services offering potential or future benefit (e.g. introducing new crop varieties) as they tend to be risk averse.
- In general, mobile phone applications should provide accurate, timely information that is specifically tagetted at the user in order to have the greatest impact on poverty.

Read the executive summary here: Rural Communities and Communication Needs, Uganda - Executive Summary

This Gamos study has now been used to guide the design of several AppLab projects, which are providing appropriate, useful and relevant services to rural communities in Uganda:

View the project website here - www.grameenfoundation.applab.org/section/applications-deployed