



# **VBSA Glencore** case study



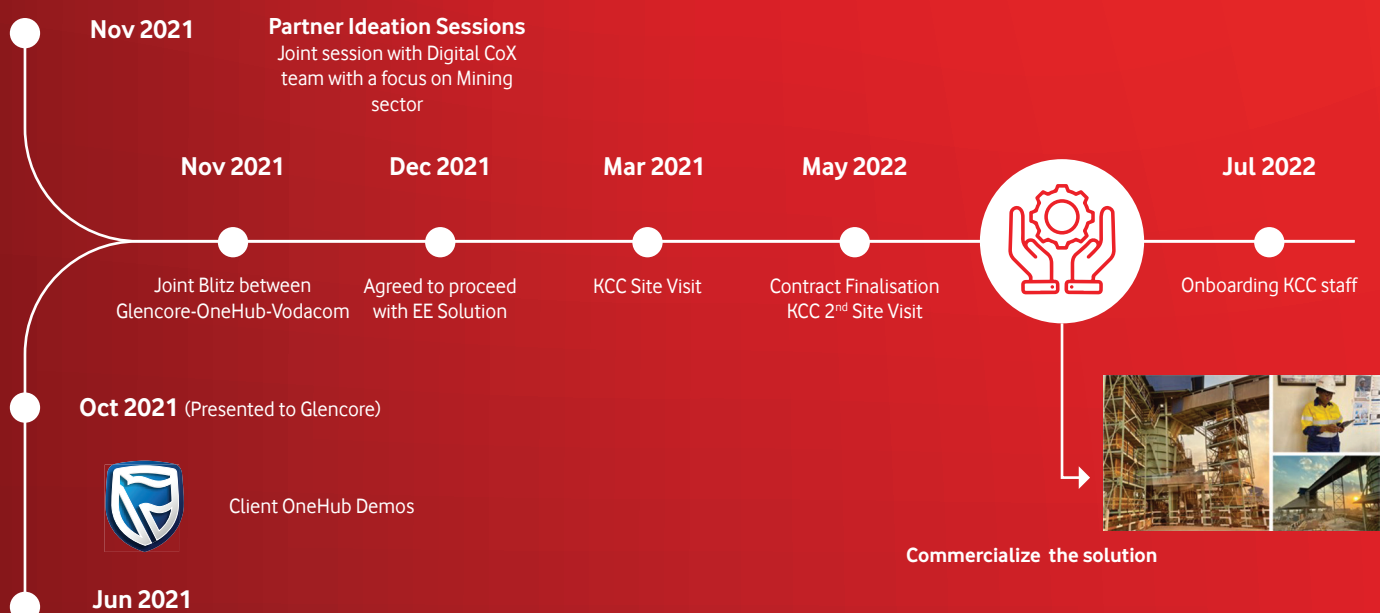


## VBSA Glencore case study

In 2021, Vodacom Business South Africa's Digital Co-X team collaborated with mining company Glencore to explore innovative solutions aimed at addressing pressing challenges that kept the mining company awake at night. Glencore is world's largest mining company and operated two mines in DRC from that focused on the extractions of copper and cobalt.

The latter is a key material in making many things like batteries that are part of the new sustainable energy economy and key to the transition to electric vehicles. 70% of the world's cobalt comes from DRC and Glencore is extracting the largest share of that percentage in DRC. It is investing US\$8 billion in these operations in the country, making it one of the largest single investments in the continent and one of the biggest investors in the country itself. Kamoto Copper company employs around 6,000 people, 50% of whom are contractors and its sister mine Mumi has around 5,000 workers and contractors. These employees are a key part of the financial health of the provincial capital Kolwezi that has a population of over half a million people.

Through a strategic partnership with Standard Bank's One Hub and the Digital Co-X, workshops were organised with the senior management stakeholders of Glencore using design thinking methodology and with the challenge statement: "How can we assist Glencore in commercializing its mine in Kolwezi? This ideation session allowed everyone to be able to "Think wrong": in other words put up a wide range of ideas, everything from the slightly speculative to genuinely possible new ideas.



Among the pool of many, many ideas generated during the workshops, the group reduced options down to a shortlist of 10 promising concepts. About two-thirds of the way into the workshop it became clear that the company needed to start with its employees, as a way into uplifting the local communities it was part of in Kolwezi. The challenge for Glencore was that only about 20% of the workforce was connected to any mobile or other device.

As a result, both employees and managers were heavily reliant on noticeboards and paper bulletins and these were not always read. As a result, most essential communications were done face-to-face. DRC is not without its challenges both in terms of electricity supply and connectivity coverage, although the latter has improved a great deal recently as a direct result of implementing Vodacom's Network quality improvement plans.

The solution involved developing a tailored app specifically for a mining company. In addition, Glencore provided employees with dedicated mobile devices that would allow them to use the app, as well as sufficient data to ensure they never worried about running out of data. According to Jonathan Lamb, Executive, One Hub: "After the workshop, we went back to the client and presented our proposed solution and said this is what we're thinking and they were excited. At this stage it was still somewhat theoretical however the client was very inspired and they agreed to proceed with the implementation once presented with the commercial / financial options.

In collaboration with our partner, Wyzetalk, the Vodacom Business team were able to successfully supply the app and online processes for this employee engagement solution. Vodacom Business played a crucial role in providing the data and smartphones for each of 10,000 workers to make it possible, the costs of which were paid for by Glencore. To ensure the devices remained functional at the mines each of the phones was provided with screen protectors and cases to protect them in these challenging work environments, as well as a solar power bank.

Workers were also able to use the smartphones beyond the workplace, at home and the healthy data provision encouraged them to allow other family members to use it at home. The current offering also addresses identity management and control using Standard Bank's iIDENTIFY solution – which was a big problem Glencore in terms of – authenticating who does what, where (e.g. is that the actual employee checking in to the Glencore Community Hospital).





So what has happened since the initial implementation of the project? Initially local supervisory management were a bit sceptical as it was a new system with a group of people that had never had work phones. However, the employees have adapted well and there has been a lot of buy-in: depending on the content put up, there has been 80-90% engagement.

The content has included essential functions like pay slips and leave and wider information on Health and Safety. It also includes selected newspaper articles put up that are relevant to what the employees are doing. This thoughtful approach enhances the overall user experiences.

According to Tshene Wedi, Regional Communications Manager, Glencore Copper Mining: “We started by thinking of it as a communications tool and a channel for that. But it’s becoming a whole lot more. Now there are lots of conversations about how to leverage it to do more things. For example, we want to be able to put blast notices up to keep everyone informed about important updates related to their work environment.”

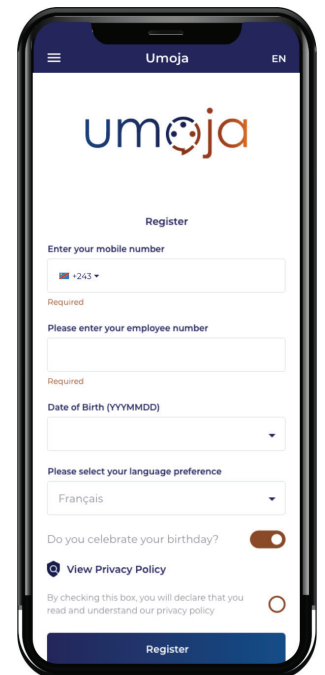
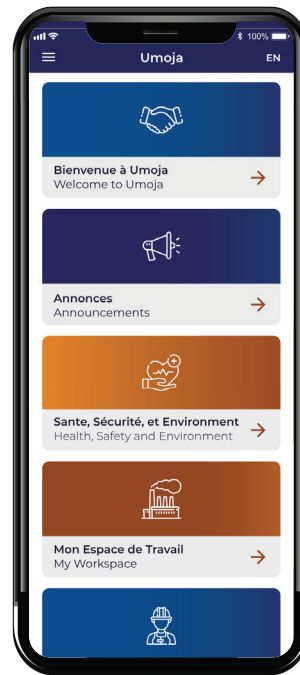
The Umoja App, the first project of its kind in the DR Congo, is a joint initiative of Standard Bank, Vodacom and KCC.



**The challenge:** Mineworkers on the Frontline didn't have direct access to emails, announcements and intranet communications, limiting engagement and collaboration within the business.



**The solution:** Digital inclusion through the Umoja App. All employees of KCC will receive smartphones with Data bundles.



“Also we want to deliver push notifications to individuals if their shift is going to change or something else changes. We can message them immediately. Furthermore we are in other conversations about training and development as we can make videos and online content available through their devices. It’s a smart way to provide every employee with information, and later on we will leverage this platform to include operational processes, like immediate incident reporting . Efficiency is gained by improving both communication and employee engagement.”

According to Tshene Wedi, the Regional Communications Manager at Glencore Copper Mining, the app initially started as a communications tool and a channel for disseminating information. However, it has evolved into much more than that over time.

Now, there are discussions about leveraging the app for various other purposes. One such example is using it to post blast notices to keep all employees informed about important updates related to their work environment. Additionally, the app aims to incorporate push notifications to alert individuals if there are any changes in their shifts or other important updates that need immediate communication.

Furthermore, there are ongoing discussions about using the app for training and development purposes. By making videos and online content available through the app, employees can access valuable learning resources conveniently on their devices.

By expanding its functionality and usability, the app serves as a smart way to ensure



that every employee has access to essential information. This not only improves communication and engagement but also contributes to enhanced efficiency within the organization

This solution was only possible by embracing the spirit of One Vodacom, with contributions to the implementation as follows:

- The Vodacom's DRC networks team upgraded its infrastructure to ensure that there was sufficient coverage to ensure an effective solution.
- Vodacom DRC's procurement team sourced all the smartphones required with screen protectors and solar chargers.
- The DRC Enterprise Business Unit set up all of the phones with the platform management tool VSDM and the WyzeTalk software. It was also responsible for device batching and delivery support, as well as providing and managing data bundles for each phone.
- Vodacom South Africa's IoT team onboarded WyzeTalk as a partner to make sure its software worked properly.
- Vodacom South Africa also managed the VSDM solution and its implementation on the phones.
- The Digital X Co was responsible for overall design and implementation orchestration and Vodacom Business South Africa handled overall project management.

Looking forward, the platform developed has a roadmap well-defined subsequent phases for Glencore Copper DRC which includes the provision of financial services, agritech solutions for small holder farmers and IOT-based supply chain solutions. These solutions have the potential to scale to other parts of the Glencore Group.

Additionally, the mining cluster at Standard Bank CIB has expressed enthusiasm in extending the solution to other clients, indicating its potential for broader application across other industries. There is currently a significant pipeline of opportunities the joint teams are pursuing, focussed on organisations with large front line worker employees (eg security cluster)

For Vodacom, this represents a path towards creating substantial value, aiming for a 10X increase in the platform's impact and benefits. The platform's evolution and potential for widespread adoption hold the promise of significant value creation for all parties involved.



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