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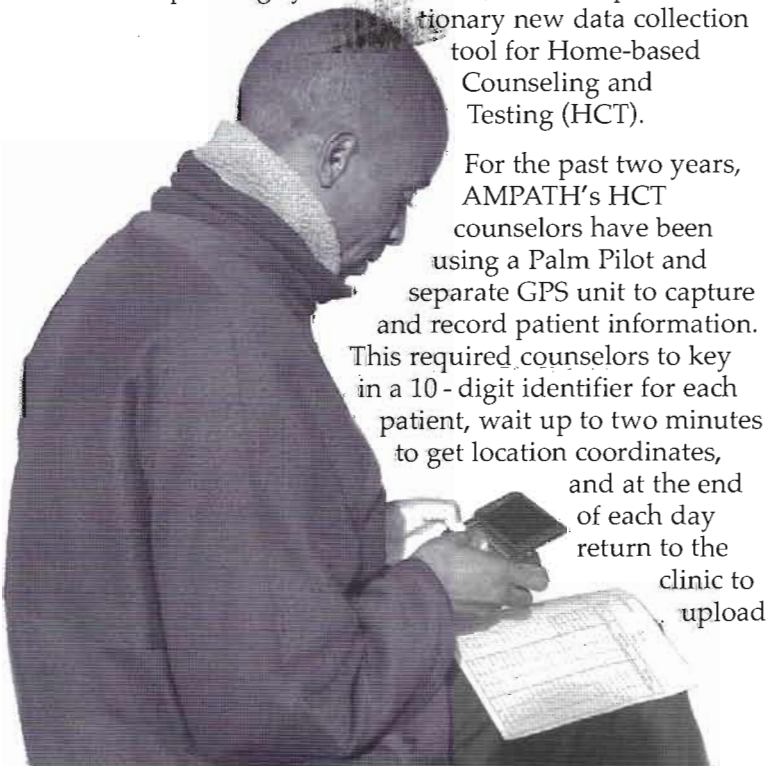
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Going Google

Cutting edge technology from Silicon Valley is being deployed in the rural outreaches of western Kenya, now that AMPATH is using Google's open source mobile operating system (Android) to develop a revolutionary new data collection tool for Home-based Counseling and Testing (HCT).



For the past two years, AMPATH's HCT counselors have been using a Palm Pilot and separate GPS unit to capture and record patient information. This required counselors to key in a 10 - digit identifier for each patient, wait up to two minutes to get location coordinates, and at the end of each day return to the clinic to upload

their information to a central database. The new Android-based G1 phones have GPS integrated into the handset and can record location coordinates in just seconds. The phone's camera can scan patient identification barcodes rather than require numbers to be entered by hand – reducing time spent collecting data and the incidence of data entry errors that occur when the numbers are input manually. And perhaps most importantly, the phones can upload data automatically from the field using a cellular network. This new mobile data collection tool will allow AMPATH to transmit data collected in the field directly into their medical records system. Soon data managers in the central office will be able to track data in real time. Real time data tracking is expected to improve health outcomes and reduce program costs. Additionally, the Android platform provides AMPATH with significant room to grow new functionalities into the technology as they are needed.



AMPATH now has 125 G1 phones in Eldoret and another 125 on the way. HCT counselors in Burnt Forest are currently out in the field with the devices and are quickly ramping up, having visited over 15,000 households.

(left) Counselors use the new Google G1 phone for data collection