

# Recommendations

BeCauseHealth Seminar

March 25th 2016

# Preamble

- We encourage Belgian actors working in health cooperation to **adopt a more ambitious vision** on their possible role in the development and strengthening of e-health in their partner countries.
- All our future digital investments should be in line with the values and health system vision promoted by Be Cause Health; they must be inclusive and contribute to equitable access of all users to quality health services.

# Good practices

- We recommend Belgian actors to adopt and promote good practices identified by other communities and coalitions already committed to an inclusive development of e-health in LICs.

# Good practice #1

- Information systems at the level of health facilities and points of care must be **user centric and provide a direct personal benefit** for the end user by solving end user problems. This effectiveness and best-fit with the context can be ensured by active involvement of the end users in the design and implementation of the e-health solution.

## Good practice #2

- Information systems at the level of point of care, health facilities and vertical programs **should not be 'silo applications' - they should aim at being part of broader national and regional health information platforms.** This requires the implementation of interfaces to data warehouses and monitoring and surveillance systems. Interoperability, through the adoption of international health information and technology standards, is thereby key.

# Good practice #3

- To assure operability of a digital system, **pre-conditions** related to the digital infrastructure should be taken into account in the early stages of a programme of project.

# Building a supportive ecosystem in Belgium

- We recommend Belgian actors to **invest in processes and platforms** which will lead to the emergence of a strong community of Belgian actors at the crossroad of public health and digital technology. We recommend the Minister of Development Cooperation and of the Digital Agenda to **facilitate this collective endeavour.**

# Ecosystem in the South

- We invite Belgian actors, including the bilateral cooperation, **to develop actions in favour of the emergence or strengthening of communities of digital actors in the South**. This can be achieved for example through support of national strategies, investment in hardware, collaboration with local universities development of numeracy skills through education programmes, support to non-state actors (e.g. incubators for local start-ups) & e-health projects, online communities (esp. for Francophone Africa), funding opportunities, fellowships, twinning programmes, coaching,...



# Fragile settings - invest in the foundations!

- We recommend that fragile settings receive peculiar attention, as there is a high risk that they are left behind. Belgium and the **BTC** in particular could focus on what it is good at : building the foundations. This includes (1) education & skills, (2) donor coordination, (3) multi-sectoral attention, (4) coherent regulations and (5) transparent, performing and trustworthy institutions also open to private initiatives.

# Building the evidence

- eHealth initiatives/pilots should be rigorously evaluated. We need **evidence** on effectiveness and cost-effectiveness and an appropriate agenda of implementation research (why it works or not, how it works, for whom...). This could provide space for collaboration between actors, including academia from Belgium and the South.

# Right aid instruments

- We recommend the government and DGD to reassess its **aid instruments** through the lenses of the needs stemming from the recommendations above. This may include the creation of long-term funding models for digital investments, competitive grant systems, mechanisms collaboration between operational actors, startups and academia, regional projects, prizes, specific initiatives (supporting open data, exploitation of the big data...)