Digitizing the health sector: Role of the Medical Informatics Association

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Development of medical informatics in Burundi

Until 2012: Depending on specific needs

- Parallel developments
- Little communication between development and implementation companies
- Lack of coordination
- Academic sector little involved
- No representation at the international level
- No research in the domain

Performers

- Growing number of performers in the medical informatics field,

- However, very limited skills among health professionals,

- Need training (post-graduate, integration in the curriculum, certified short courses…)

Creation of the BHIA

- On the occasion of an "Evening of Medical Informatics" event organized by one of IT Companies of Bujumbura;

- The participants noticed that Burundi's level of development in the field of ICT in general and medical informatics in particular is still insufficient;

- Need to create a framework for the exchange of information and experiences, promoting education and research in the field of medical informatics.

The BHIA

- Nonprofit organization

- Implemented in September 2012

- 25 active members

- Member Profiles:
  IT, electronics technicians, application experts
  Doctors, pharmacists, laboratory technicians, nurses
  Teachers in universities and colleges.

Activities carried

Date	Activitie	Topic
October 2012	Participation MedInfo 2012	Approval by IMIA (International Medical Informatics Association)
February 4th, 2013	Evening « start of BHIA activities »	Universal health coverage: implications for the management of health information in Burundi
October 3rd, 2013	Evening of Health Informatics	Medical ethics facing the computerization of the health sector
March 28th, 2014	International Conference of Health informatics	Interoperability and research in Health informatics
June-july 2015	Participation in the development of the National Health Informatics Plan	

BHIA action plan 2016

- Continue to inform the public and health care partners on the progress of medical informatics in Burundi and awareness on the contribution of ICT in the management of health information through Medical Information Days.

- Represent Burundi in Medical Informatics Appointements

- Prepare held in Bujumbura of the Pan African Conference of February 2017 in collaboration with HELINA;

- Develop stakeholder training projects in the field of computerization of the health sector.

Role of BHIA

- Neutral forum for discussion and exchange of experiences;

- Scientific framework and reporting of applications of medical informatics and research advances in the field of ICT, for healthcare professionals, scientists, IT solutions development companies and authorities concerned;

Role of BHIA (following)

- Mediation: facilitates exchanges between health professionals on the one hand, and scientists specialized in the computer, representatives of research organizations, public authorities on the other.

- Contribute to the professional and ethical reflection that should accompany the development and implementation of regulations governing such automated processing of medical information;

Role of BHIA (End)

- Link : Collaborates with scientific groups and associations with similar objectives and represents Burundi at international level particularly in HELINA and IMIA (International Medical Informatics Association).

- Training framework: To contribute to the training of health professionals, researchers, engineers, and technicians, medical informatics;

Lessons learned

- **lessons**:

➢ The field of medical informatics is attracting increasing public ,

➢ An association like this can do much to raise awareness of the benefits of computerization in the health sector,

- **challenges**:

➢ Good cooperation with the Ministry of Health and possibly the Ministry of ICT is essential,

➢ Mobilization of funds for the activities of the association .

Areas to strengthen

- Partnerships with other organizations or associations with similar orientations;

- Technical and financial support by the Government and the technical and financial partners.

Thank you for your attention.