

Identifying the RMNCAH+N health innovation opportunity and developing a strategy in Chad

GFF innovation workshop: June 16, 2023

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Project objectives and results

Objective:

To improve the use and quality of RMNCHAH+N essential health services for the population of Chad by :

- Improving the systematic use of data
- Exploiting digital tools, technologies and solutions
- Strengthening public resource management
- Strengthening human capital and reducing vulnerability
- Ensuring the sustainability of service delivery

Deliverables :

1. a diagnostic report on the digital health ecosystem in Chad, with a particular focus on digital health and the constituent elements of the data system.
2. A shortlist of proven and feasible innovations in the Chadian context that can be implemented on a large scale to improve CHW supervision and ongoing training of health workers and final recommendations of tools that can be implemented by the Government of Chad and/or other stakeholders;
3. a roadmap or proposal for recommended next steps to inform the development of a comprehensive digital health strategy for the Government of Chad.

GFF added value

- **Catalytic financing for**
- **Development of a tool for community health workers**
- **Assessing the innovation landscape**
- **Developing a digital health strategy**

Digital economy context: digital infrastructure is weak; opportunities are great

- Chad's digital economy ecosystem appears to be in its infancy, and the country should seek to strengthen and improve its readiness for digital transformation.
- Chad's digital sector has major shortcomings in terms of access to quality digital connectivity and use of digital services.
- Last-mile digital infrastructure is not distributed across the country in line with regional economic potential.

Digital economy context: digital infrastructure is weak; opportunities are great

- Resource constraints and problems in coordinating government and partner efforts limit Chad's ability to effectively implement and extend many of the strategies in place.
- Challenges to Chad's community health strategy (poor coordination of partners, low activity and quality of community health services, lack of reliable data on community health)
- Limited resources (poor mobile connectivity, electricity, digital literacy) and enabling environment (strong community health strategy design, willingness of development partners to collaborate).

Opportunities

- Chad has invested a great deal of strategic effort and resources in building a solid foundation for an effective and widely dispersed community health workforce.
- The strategies associated with the community health workforce and its integration into health facilities provide a solid framework for effective implementation.
- Where they are deployed, digitized systems are only implemented between the central and district levels of the health system, offering scope for extension to the health center or community level.
- The digitization of HMIS with the implementation of DHIS2 is still in a pilot phase, and is only extended to the district level, with manual data collection and reporting in place at all levels of the health system.
- Several partner-supported initiatives with digital components, including the extension of DHIS2 for district-level health information.

Recommendations from the feasibility study on digital solutions for community health

- Reduced fragmentation of partners (and resources for community health workers, programs and the data reports they provide) thanks to coordination and governance at central level.
- Increased quantity and quality of services provided at community level by the existing national CHW framework through dedicated and trained peer supervisors and digital supervision tools.
- Improved accuracy and transparency of community health information at all levels through the deployment of digital monitoring tools.

Summary of key recommendations - Strategy and policy

| Investment area | Question overview | Feasibility study recommendation |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Develop a comprehensive digital health strategy, including a costed long-term plan for operating, maintaining and supporting digital health systems, as well as addressing the other key issues mentioned below. The process of developing this plan, as well as the plan itself, should be a tool for building political support for a comprehensive approach to implementing digital health on a national scale.</p> | <p>The Ministry of Health currently has neither a digital health strategy nor a costed plan to support digital implementation. In addition, there is a lack of political will to support digital health. All of these elements are essential to align policy, funding and implementation of any digital health rollout and should be addressed as part of an overall strategic planning process. A digital health strategy should also align with efforts to create a national e-government strategy.</p> | <p>[High priority]. Develop a five-year national roadmap for the digitization of public services, supported by an effective institutional framework.</p> <p>Reduced fragmentation of partners (and resources for community health workers, programs and the data reports they provide) through central coordination and governance.</p> <p>Produce a comprehensive mapping of partners, including qualitative and quantitative information on each partner's activities. Multilateral and bilateral agencies, civil society organizations, international, national and local non-governmental organizations, among others, must be taken into account. Information to be collected should include: activities quantified, health zones supported, community relays supported, contributions to health information systems (data collection, analysis), willingness to participate in a coordinating body, etc.</p> |

Summary of key recommendations - Strategy and policy

| Investment area | Question overview | Feasibility study recommendation |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Develop policies to harmonize and govern the approach to digital health strategy and implementation | In the absence of e-government policies and regulatory frameworks at national level, work should be accelerated with other stakeholders at national level to develop policies for the healthcare sector that can eventually be aligned with a broader national data governance framework. | [High priority]. Strengthen the legal and regulatory framework to consolidate the development of digital administration, the provision of digital public services and the extension of digital public platforms. R2.4 [High priority]. Develop a national data governance framework and policy to establish protocols and standards for how government institutions should process, store and share public and private data within the wider government ecosystem. |
| Enhancing leadership skills for digitalization | Provide digital health case studies and training for national healthcare leaders to improve understanding, demand and skills to engage in digital health. | [High priority]. Improve the digital capabilities of public administrations so that they can take advantage of digital public platforms and drive change to deliver modernized public services. Technical advisory support should be provided to the management of the DSC coordination platform. This may include leadership or governance training, peer learning with other countries (i.e. technical working group methods in other ministries of health) and/or co-chairing of the platform by a designated development partner (e.g. a partner from the World Bank Group, UNICEF or the Global Fund is represented as co-chair of the platform for a given period to ensure that the group achieves its stated objectives). |

Summary of critical recommendations - Health information management

| Investment area | Question overview | Feasibility study recommendation |
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| <p>Map and identify weaknesses in current data capture and reporting systems and address processes prior to digitization, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular support supervision • Reduce the workload associated with data entry • Standardize registers | <p>Support supervision is currently carried out on an ad hoc basis. In order to promote data accuracy and utilization, a regular coaching system with documented areas for improvement and follow-up is needed. In addition, there are not enough staff to ensure real-time data entry at the point of delivery. Registers exist, but they are not standardized across the country.</p> | <p>Increased quantity and quality of services provided at community level by the existing national CHW framework through trained and dedicated peer supervisors and digital supervision tools.</p> <p>Improved accuracy and transparency of community health information at all levels through the deployment of digital monitoring tools.</p> |
| <p>Improving digital literacy supervision and training</p> | <p>Due to the general lack of digitization in Chad, as well as the low level of basic literacy, it is imperative to provide training not only on the functionality of a specific tool, but also on digital literacy in general</p> | <p>Digital literacy and language skills (language of equipment parameters and handling requirements, training materials, etc.) have been identified as a major challenge in Chad, particularly in projects that have implemented a digital solution.) have been identified as a major challenge in Chad, particularly in projects that have implemented a digital solution. This led to the recommendation to design a tool for</p> |

ASC tool recommendations

- The best-established tool is the Swiss TPH SysRef.
- It is recommended that the GFF work towards a better understanding of SysRef and determine whether its use can be generalized.
- SysRef uses a clinical decision support system to deliver up-to-date information and clinical know-how to healthcare professionals in the form of an application on tablet computers.
- The tool supports clinical and therapeutic decision-making and is used to improve the quality of care provided to the refugee population in Chad.
- It is currently being implemented in the Logone Oriental region, more specifically in Goré, where it has proved its effectiveness.
- An extension is planned by PADS to the Moyen Chari and Batha regions.
- Some NGOs are planning to use the tool for mental health in eastern Chad, in Wadi Fira and Ouaddai.

Next steps

Developing strategy and policy

- Develop a comprehensive digital health strategy, including a costed long-term plan.
- Develop policies to harmonize and govern the approach to digital health strategy and implementation
- Improving managers' digitalization skills

Map and improve existing processes and skills

- map and identify weaknesses in current data capture and communication systems
- Improving general supervision and training in digital literacy
- Set up a unique customer identification system

Select and design tool(s)

- Take infrastructure realities into account when choosing and designing a digital tool
- Equipment acquisition and training for installations

Developing strategy, policy and political will

Map and improve existing processes and skills

Tool selection and design