

## Session Outcome Document

### **DPI+H – health for All through Digital Public Infrastructure: Understanding the essential connections between eGovernment investments and the Health Sector**

#### **PATH**

Friday, 31 May 2024 | 10:00—10:45 (UTC+02:00)

<https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/213>

#### **Key Issues discussed (5- 8 bullet points)**

- DPI-H is critical for promoting individual, public, and population health and, as a component of broader DPI, for promoting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) because health intersects with other sectors, such as education (e.g., health literacy), finance (e.g., financial services for health), agriculture (e.g., nutrition), and environment (e.g., environmental risks to health).
- Many low- and middle-income countries have made significant progress over the last decade in developing digital health governance structures, planning for digital health systems, and drafting and adopting digital health strategies and enterprise architectures that provide a backbone for digital health governance.
- However, countries still experience challenges implementing DPI-H, and there is more we can do as people working in the digital health space to strengthen the DPI-H/infrastructure approach globally and in countries.
- It is important to make sure that the focus is on solving a problem and not just focusing on doing DPI for DPI's sake alone. It is important to consider long-term financing for ongoing operations of any DPI, as well as emphasizing the ability to unlock data.
- DPI needs to be treated horizontally/cross-sectorally to scale rather than treated vertically just for health. This will set the enabling environment for DPI-H along with leadership, governance and regulatory capacity, health data governance capacity, and technical workforce capacity.
- An infrastructure approach to health can create a more efficient digital health ecosystem by leveraging a common set of open, widely scaled, relatively basic digital functions for health systems and aligning innovators, implementers, and governments around that approach. Cross-sectoral financing can help shift from massive upfront financing investments to funding for the long term.
- Convergence workshops can be ways to bring in multi sectoral buy in for fundamental work that is not health specific. Networks like AeHIN can help with figuring out what the long-term needs are.

#### **Towards WSIS+20 and WSIS beyond 2025, please share your views on the emerging trends, challenges, achievements, and opportunities in the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines to date (5-8 bullets)**

- There was a rich discussion in this session on how digital public infrastructure is a key part of building a healthy enabling environment for digital health, which is aligned with Action line C6. While progress has been made in that arena, more work can be done—especially to increase and align investments in the space to ensure DPI-H measures are sustained in the long-term.

**Tangible outcomes (such as key achievements, announcements, launches, agreements, commitments, figures, and success stories (3-5 bullet points))**

- Speakers emphasized the need for a “mega-use case” for countries to rally around to push for their DPI-H. Egypt was cited as a great example where they used their universal health insurance as the driver to do the fundamental components of their DPI-H with identity, EHR, and payment systems.
- In a report developed in 2023 by PATH, Co-Develop, Vital Wave, with funding from the McGovern Foundation and Wellcome Trust, we explored how a DPI approach can be applied to digital health and offered a framework grounded in priority digital health interventions. The report was offered as a framework for the discussion. The recommendations from the report included:
  - Strengthen global ecosystem – support funding model for consistent core product development of identified DPI-H components to strengthen shelf-readiness
  - Strengthen global market of supporting DPGs – representative training data and open content
  - Operationalize health data security frameworks
  - Strengthen regulation and data governance
  - Strengthen country capacity to prepare for DPI-H implementation
  - Coordinate donor investments for implementation of multiple DPI-H components

**Actionable plan and key recommendations (2-5 points)**

- AeHIN will consider using its country convergence meetings (which include MOH as well as finance, ICT, and other key stakeholders) as a forum to focus on DPI-H.
- WHO and other partners of GIDH will continue to support the initiative to ensure continuity of care, available supplies, health workers are paid, and universal health coverage. WHO is moving away from testing individual innovations to think about the broader system with DPI-H. DPI is not new, and health is now becoming more of a part of that, joining foundational DPIs with policies, governance, and capacity. WHO supports the full stack approach, and GIDH is key to that work.

**Suggestions for thematic aspects that might be included in the WSIS Forum 2025 (one paragraph)**

Given the momentum around GIDH and its potential to unlock additional funding to lighthouse countries through its needs tracker, there may be an opportunity at WSIS2025 to invite voices from those countries to share learnings and challenges—particularly regarding investments focused on DPI-H.