Navigating the Digital Health Ecosystem: a Review of Key Guidelines, Frameworks and Tools **Part 2:** *Digital Health Guidelines, Frameworks and Tools*

DIPC

State of the art digital health projects build on existing evidence, and normative guidelines, frameworks, and tools in various areas, ranging from software development to financing and equitable programing. In the context of the GIZ Digital Innovation in Pandemic Control (DIPC) Initiative, the Robert Koch Institute, Germany, has conducted a comprehensive analysis on key digital public health definitions and concepts, and on 75 normative resources for digital health programing across 11 digital health topics, published between 2012 and early 2024 [link]. Findings from the report have been summarized in form of 20 easy to use Factsheets. The current factsheet (13/20) summarizes the findings on the identified **Guidelines, Frameworks, and Tools for Scaling Up** and discusses strategies and resources for scaling digital health solutions to maximize their impact and sustainability.

Factsheet 13

Guidelines, Framework and Tools for Scaling Up

Target Audience

Primary Users: Developers, Donors, Ministries of Health

Secondary Users: Healthcare Providers, Government Bodies

Relevance

Scaling up digital health initiatives improves healthcare access in underserved areas, enhancing equity and reaching vulnerable populations. Expanded programs can lead to better health outcomes, reduced costs per patient through economies of scale, and larger datasets for research and decision-making. Government support is bolstered, integrating digital health into national policies and fostering innovation. Challenges in scaling-up are well-known, however, a successfully scaled initiative has the potential to intergrate seamlessly into a healthcare systems, thereby offering more sustainable solutions that can serve broader populations.

Findings

Number of resources identified: 3

The National eHealth Strategy Toolkit outlines essential conditions for scaling national eHealth strategies, including a supportive policy environment, adequate human resources, and robust technology infrastructure. Implementers play a pivotal role in advancing these strategies at the national level despite external factors like electrical grid stability or cellular coverage. The WHO's MAPS toolkit further guides DH planners on program scale-up, emphasizing sustainability and institutionalization as crucial goals. Best practices from a 2018 study (Labrique et. al, 2018) underscore the importance of addressing practical needs, ensuring technical simplicity and interoperability, aligning with healthcare policies, and considering infrastructure readiness for successful digital health scale-up in LMICs.

Framework and Toolkit

Understanding scale of digital tools: a framework and triangulation tool to measure scale of digital deployments in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic'
Provides a way to evaluate scaling efforts by assessing an intervention's scale through three dimensions.
Published by: Digital Square
Year: NA
Language: English

mHealth Assessment and Planning for Scale (MAPS) Toolkit
Currently the only comprehensive and targeted guideline document for DH planners and implementers addressing DH program scale-up, and thus a "must-consult" for practitioners.
Published by: WHO
Year: 2015
Language: English

Guide

The journey to scale – moving together past digital health pilots
Offers insights into achieving widespread and sustainable digital health interventions. It emphasizes coordinated efforts towards institutionalization, highlighting critical success factors such as clear goals, strong leadership, viable economic models, and interoperability standards.
Published by: PATH
Year: 2014
Language: English

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This is based on *"Navigating the Digital Health Ecosystem: A Review of Key Guidelines, Frameworks, and Tools"*

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