Center for Digital Health

Ministry of Ministry
Center for Digital Health (CDH)
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1   Background

Tanzania's health sector has realized several innovative digital health interventions implemented by the government and its partners. The Government of Tanzania is committed to improving the application of Digital health technologies in order to facilitate the attainment of the overall objective of delivering high-quality health services to all citizens. This is evidenced by the implementation of the first eHealth Strategy 2013-2018, the Digital Health Investment Roadmap 2017-2023, and the launch of its new National Digital Health Strategy 2019-2024. With all these investments, we have seen the design, development, and implementation of many digital tools that can potentially help Tanzania realize its vision of utilizing digital technology to strengthen its health system.

Recently, the Government of Tanzania, through MOH, has prioritized the establishment of the Centre for Digital Health (CDH) in the Health Sector Strategic Plan V 2021-2026. The aim of establishing this center is to bring together innovators, technologists, clinicians, digital health stakeholders, and society to provide all the elements necessary to design, build, and deploy enterprise-level digital health interventions for all levels of the health system. The CDH will streamline resources, address the problem of coordination, improve implementation plans and roadmap, alignment with the national strategy, systems harmonization, and remove duplication of efforts as well as the sustainability of digital health investments in the health sector.

1.1   Purpose of Digital Health Center of Excellence

The purpose of the CDH is to create an enabling environment to support the design, development, testing, and rollout of enterprise-level digital solutions. The CDH will include both a physical working space for the technical team of experts, as well as contributors and advisors, and a software development infrastructure to ensure successful oversight and delivery of digital health solutions.

The CDH will bring together several full-time staff that will ensure digital solutions that are developed by the government and other stakeholders are aligned with the health sector's digital transformation plan as articulated in the digital health strategy and health sector enterprise architecture blueprint. This team will be staffed with full-time members that are employed by the government or seconded by partners. The aim is to ensure Tanzania delivers on its vision to digitalize the health sector from the point of care to the policy-making level.

The CDH will do the following:

- **Provide Support**: offer support to individuals who will be working to develop and deploy digital health solutions in Tanzania.
- **Ensure digital solutions are part of the ecosystem**: ensure all solutions developed to work in the Tanzanian health system fit well with the overall digital health ecosystem.
- **Offering Guidance**: provide guidance on standards, methodologies, tools, and best practices and ensure they are adhered to.

- **Providing mentorship**: mentor contributors, provide internal training, assess innovative software engineering solutions and manage adoption and continuous improvement to developers working on solutions that are under the oversight of the center.
- **Providing oversight**: provide oversight of all digital health developers who will be working to deliver a specific solution that is being developed under the oversight of the center.
- **Provide digital health solutions**: develop and support the development of digital health solutions that can scale and be sustained.

2   Center for Digital Health

The aim of the CDH is to provide all the elements necessary to design, build, deploy, and sustain enterprise-level digital health interventions at all levels of the health system. The CDH will help bring together innovators, technologists, clinicians, and digital health stakeholders to collaborate in building digital health innovations from inception all the way into deployment for both local and global impact.

The CDH will play a critical role in the sustainability of digital solutions by building the capacity of more individuals, and by offering field experience to university students, who can support these systems in the future even if they have been developed by or with resources from partners.

2.1   Vision

To be a center of excellence in utilizing technologies in transforming health service delivery.

2.2   Mission

To deploy integrated, affordable, evidence-based, and efficient digital health technologies and techniques.

2.3   Roles and Responsibilities of the Centre for Digital Health

The primary role of the CDH is to provide expertise and technological services in the design, development, and implementation of digital health initiatives. These include;

2.3.1   Coordination, guidance, and standards
2.3.2   Systems development and deployment
2.3.3   User support
2.3.4   Research and innovation

2.4   Organizational and governance structure

2.4.1   Organizational setup

The CDH is established and housed in the ICT Unit under the leadership of the Director of ICT Unit. The Director of ICT will sectionalize the ICT Unit into two sections, namely; ICT Internal (Sector) Operations and ICT External Sector Operations. The sections will be led by Heads of Section. The Heads of Section will be Principal Officers appointed by the Director of ICT among the existing ICT Unit pool of staff. The existing staff of the ICT Unit will be allocated and engaged to the sections by the Director of ICT to perform mandated roles of the ICT Unit in collaboration with officials seconded by development and implementing partners. However, seconded staff by development and implementing partners will only be housed in the ICT External Operations Section where CDH functions will be performed.

In ensuring that human resources supply meets human resources demand, CDH will be assisted with a team of contributors. These contributors will be divided into three categories.

a. **Secondees**: these are the contributors who have been seconded to the center to provide extra pair of hands in order to support the work of the center.
b. **Contractors**: these are contributors who have been contracted to work on a specific deliverable. These contributors can be from a software vendor or individual consultants who have been contracted by a partner or the government.
c. **Students /interns**: these are students who have been identified and vetted through a competitive process to be attached to the CDH to learn and contribute to the work of the center. These students will be attached to work at the center for a maximum of 1 year. The students working in the center will be reporting and working under the management and directives of the Head of Section of the ICT External Sector Operations Section. They will be assigned tasks and their deliverables vetted and approved by the Team Lead and his/her team.
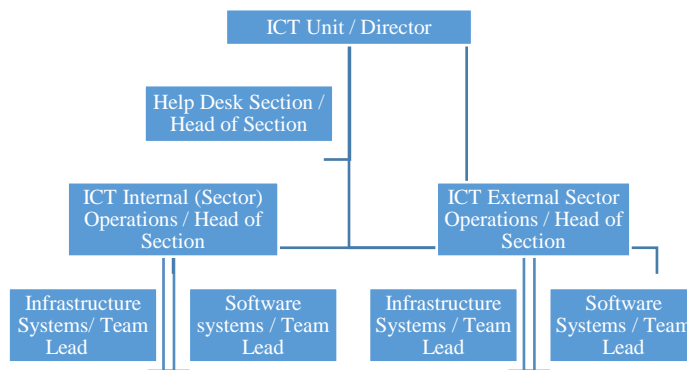
2.5   Governance structure

In order to ensure there is close oversight and control of deliverables all contributors who will be working in the CDH will be reporting and working under the management and directives of the CDH team leader. They will be assigned tasks and their deliverables vetted and approved by the team leader and his/her team.

In executing her core functions, the CDH will partner with both international, national, and local partners. The partners include; Governing Unit, National Digital Health Steering Committee (NDHSC), National Digital Health Secretariat (NDHS), secondees/interns/contributors, and digital health system implementing and development partners.

For more information contact.
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