INFORMATION DOCUMENT: 7.3 PNG's experience in digital health preparation for digital health maturity assessment

1. BACKGROUND

The National Health Plan 2021-2030 (NHP) has a vision and objectives with targets to be achieved. Measuring health sector performance over the period of the NHP is critical to determine progress in implementation of the Plan, whether inputs delivered are providing the expected results (accountability), how services and policies need to be improved or adapted for better outcomes (learning). A M&E Strategic Plan is needed to: Guide and coordinate measurement with clearly defined indicators, data sources, collection, and reporting mechanisms. Outline interventions needed to strengthen monitoring and evaluation, health information systems and digital health.

Persistent gaps continue to exist in the health information over the last 10 years include; insufficient human resources with the required skills, limited ICT infrastructure and capacity, fragmented information systems and lack of interoperability. Issues with data quality including reporting coverage (private health facilities not covered). Limited strategic use of data to inform decision-making.

2. ACTION TAKEN

A new M&E Strategic Plan (2021-2030) was developed in line with the new National Health Plan (2021-2030) to track and monitor the national plan performance of 200 indicators and also identity actions to improve and strengthen the health information and digital health in the health sector.

The goal of the plan is to; improve the availability of timely, complete and accurate health-related information to monitor implementation of the NHP 2021-2030, assess health sector performance, and ensure evidence-based health service delivery and decision-making.

Objectives:
- To strengthen governance, coordination and regulations for health information systems;

- To strengthen and institutionalize systems for building human resource capacity and improving infrastructure for health information systems;

- To enhance the quality and capacity of routine health information systems

- To ensure linkages and interoperability of health information systems (HIS) in Papua New Guinea;

- To expand on conventional data sources to ensure data are readily available for decision-making and promote a culture of monitoring, evaluation and learning within NDoH and PHAs;

- To enhance use of health information at all levels of health service delivery and by all stakeholders in the health sector.

Actions taken are transferred into core priority activities and implementation schedule (2022-2026. Development and relevant partners will use this to implement the plan. Activities done so far include;

1. **Leadership & Governance:**
   a) NHP M&E Strategic Plan(2021-2030) developed, approved and will be launched in April
   b) Data Dictionary developed, approved and will be launched in April
   c) Data Management SOP developed, approved and will be launched in April
   d) Governance and Coordination established to guide the implementation process of health information and Digital Health
   e) ICT Policy developed, endorsed by SEM for National Health Board Approval
   f) PNG Digital Health Maturity Assessment started in March

2. **Strengthen Human Resource for Health Information**
   a) Defining Competency profile for health information workforce focusing on current positions for Provincial Health Information Officers (PHIOs) and Medical Records Officers (MROs). Competency profile completed and will be launched in April

3. **Establishing Provincial Health Authority Centre/Hub for 21 provinces including Autonomous Region of Bougainville**

   a) Advocacy already began with all provinces but the work has not started pending the ICT policy and eHealth Strategy yet to be provided for policy directions

4. **Develop Integrated data warehouse for national level and PHA**
   a) Discussions for national data warehouse has stated with Department of ICT to link to overall government plan for national data warehouse
   b) Provincial Health Authority dashboard has been developed and supported by World Bank and is currently piloted in two Provinces. This will be the one stop shop for all data sets from various e-systems eg, m-supply, eNHIS, IFMS

5. **Strenghten Hospital Reporting and Networks**
   a) Hospital Health Information System Assessment completed in 2022 for all 22 government hospitals in the country, report and recommendations presented for further actions. Assessment done on Inventory of hospital information system, Reporting pathway, Detail assessment of HMIS, Identify standard hospital indicators.

6. **Data quality improvement and development of tools for data quality review**

a) Provinces and health facilities visited for data quality review (43 health facilities in total in 2020-2022), report produced and actions taken to conduct more DQA will all nationally programs for 4000 plus health facilities including the Aid posts/Health Posts

3. CONCLUSIONS

For health information systems and digital health to fully functioning for the health sector, actions taken have to be constantly monitored and tracked during the implementation period. Funding must be coordinated well at all levels of service delivery. Governance and Coordination and leadership is key to support the implementation.