

World Bank eHealth training web seminar on 'ICT and health in Africa'

Yunkap Kwankam recently attended a particularly constructive webinar – and herewith the detail



I recently took part in an interesting World Bank programme that could help both eHealth neophytes and experienced practitioners to better understand what information and communication technology (ICT) can bring to support their health activities in Africa. The web seminar (or webinar) was organised jointly by two of the Bank's departments – Health, Nutrition & Population and ICT Policy. It consisted of two 3-hour sessions, held on consecutive days, during the first 2 weeks of June.

Target audience

Although the programme was initially targeted at World Bank staff, the material is useful if you fall into any of the following categories:

- Public health specialist, physician, health economist, health administrator, or operations specialist.
- People working directly on the frontline in/with ministries of health as well as development partners in countries.
- Staff responsible for policy dialogue and project management (including designing, implementing, and evaluating health projects).

Training objectives and methodology

The training course should improve your knowledge about the transformational capabilities of eHealth and, if you are a manager, increase your capacity to leverage eHealth solutions in your projects and programmes.

The programme should help you to:

- understand the policy issues around eHealth, and advise your partners (governments and other institutions) on strategic issues;
- understand basic technical issues as well as eHealth options for addressing the health challenges faced by countries and institutions;
- consider eHealth solutions in the projects they design and manage;
- know where to get additional information and technical assistance on eHealth matters.

Each course uses Powerpoint presentations and recorded voice and/or video narratives, delivered by experts in various locations, followed by a question and answer segment.

Professor S Yunkap Kwankam is Executive Director of the International Society for Telemedicine and eHealth (ISfTeH) and CEO of Global eHealth Consultants (GeHCs).

Faculty

Perhaps the most impressive aspect of the training is the faculty, which is made up of experts in the field of eHealth. Various stakeholder groups include intergovernmental organisations, industry, academia, and private philanthropy.

Each brings their own perspective to policy and practice issues, with particular emphasis on the needs of low- and middle-income countries. The faculty is a blend of World Bank staff and non-Bank experts who share their vast experience and intimate knowledge of the field with the participants. The faculty represents five key eHealth stakeholder groups:

1. **Intergovernmental organisations** (IGOs)
International Telecommunications Union, World Bank, and World Health Organization.
2. **Academia**
University of Calgary, University of Kwazulu-Natal.
3. **Private sector**
Cisco Systems, Inc., Global eHealth Consultants (GeHCs), Intel (by prerecorded video presentation), and Telemedicine Africa (Pty)
4. **Private philanthropy**
The Rockefeller Foundation
5. **Civil society**
The International Society for Telemedicine and eHealth (ISfTeH)

Conclusion

Among those who have so far benefitted from the programme there is general agreement that the sessions represent useful learning modules that should not be archived but made accessible to those wishing to re-live the experience and also new participants. To this end a permanent URL for this page is set up at: <http://go.worldbank.org/IC5U3WDYSO>.

The next phase is thought to be availability of the entire recorded programme (including participant interactions) for possible download and use by other interested parties. There have also been requests/suggestions that the material be packaged into a more formal training course. Stay tuned.