

Data Use Acceleration and Learning (DUAL)

Overview

The Data Use Acceleration and Learning (DUAL) initiative is a partnership between PATH and Cooper/Smith that aims to share what works to achieve digital transformation. DUAL is amplifying learnings from five focal countries—Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Malawi, South Africa, and Tanzania—that have been digitalizing their health systems and strengthening the use of health data to achieve better health outcomes. DUAL packaged these countries’ experiences into a model that distills their learnings into practical, measurable recommendations for digital transformation, representing a comprehensive approach to transforming a country’s health data systems and digital tools.

The model’s ten essential elements of sustainable digital transformation for data use (see figure 1) can be applied by countries at any stage in their process to accelerate data use. The model’s elements are highly interrelated and are intended to be addressed together. The DUAL model supports a range of digital health stakeholders—country governments; global and regional policymakers; implementers, including the private sector; and funders operating at a regional or global scale—collaborating with countries to help digitalize their health systems in alignment with their health targets and digital maturity.



Figure 1: The DUAL model for data use acceleration

How policymakers can use the DUAL model

Policymakers can champion the DUAL model and develop policies and guidance in accordance with its recommendations. Policymakers develop standards and policies for digital health. They review and synthesize the current evidence base for digital and data interventions to enact new guidance on the use and scale-up of digital health solutions for countries’ health systems. The DUAL model helps policymakers establish governance bodies, guidance, and technology standards in support of countries’ national digital health strategies.

Recommended actions for policymakers

- ❖ Develop guidance for and promote adoption of two new elements: data use ecosystems and change management.
- ❖ Use evidence generated from country implementations to define policies and guidance.
- ❖ Encourage development of investment roadmaps at the country level to accurately budget and scope digital transformation for data use strategies.

Examples of actions being taken by policymakers



Policy

Building on existing policies and standards

In Burkina Faso, the Ministry of Health defined a ten-year strategic plan for its National Health Information System (NHIS), which was later evaluated by implementers. Information gleaned from the evaluation provided a comprehensive analysis that the government is using to draft key strategies for the next five years, including the *NHIS 2021–2025 Strategic Plan*, *Digital Health Strategy*, *Health Sector Development Plan*, and the *National Economic and Social Development Strategy*.



Investment

Co-developing an investment roadmap

In Tanzania, implementers and funders partnered with the government of Tanzania to create the *Digital Health Investment Roadmap (2017–2023)*. The roadmap aligns digital health priorities for the country and gives 36 recommendations for investment, as well as financing and cost guidelines. The roadmap helps to ensure that current and future digital health investments support Tanzania's strategic vision for digital health while prioritizing finite resources.



Strategy

Tracking and connecting systems and interventions

In Ethiopia, the Digital Health Projects Inventory was created to help track and manage Ethiopia's disparate systems and map the existing data use ecosystem. This searchable, web-based system enables the registration of different digital health implementations and can be used by policymakers and other stakeholders to increase coordination and understand where investments are needed to improve digital systems and infrastructure.

For more information, contact dual@path.org.

Visit the DUAL website: <https://www.acceleratedatause.org>.