



Resolution

**REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN**

**EM/RC69/R.6
October 2022**

**Sixty-ninth session
Agenda item 3(e)**

Regional strategy for fostering digital health in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (2023–2027)

The Regional Committee,

Having reviewed the technical paper on fostering digital health in the Eastern Mediterranean Region;¹

Recalling resolution WHA71.7 of the Seventy-first World Health Assembly on digital health, Executive Board decision EB146(15) on data and innovation, and decision WHA73(28) of the Seventy-third World Health Assembly on the Global strategy on digital health;

Recognizing that effective implementation of digital health technologies is crucial for efficient national and subnational health systems, and that such technologies offer important opportunities for health innovation, but also present potential risks;

Noting that countries across the world are seeking to establish a sound evidence base for optimal investment in digital health to address national and subnational health priorities, and that this is particularly important in the Eastern Mediterranean Region given the wide socioeconomic disparities and protracted conflicts and emergencies in many Member States;

Concerned about the implications of implementing digital health as well as governance challenges, issues of data security and privacy, and potential risks to health systems and individuals from the inappropriate use of digital technology, and noting that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought these challenges and opportunities into stark relief;

Cognizant that achieving *Vision 2023* and WHO's triple billion targets requires use of limited health care resources to reach those who are most in need, and that the efficiency gains offered by digital health can support Member States' efforts to achieve the targets;

Recognizing the need to develop ethically sound policies on innovative digital technologies to protect at-risk populations from the potential adverse impacts of the inappropriate use of technology and to enhance governance capacity and mechanisms to implement and uphold those policies;

- 1. ENDORSES** the regional strategy for fostering digital health in the Eastern Mediterranean Region and its action plan, as proposed in document EM/RC69/8;

¹ EM/RC69/8.

2. URGES Member States to:

- 2.1 Establish structures and processes to strengthen digital health governance, norms and standards at national and subnational levels as applicable;
- 2.2 Develop national digital health strategies, national architecture blueprints and related action plans, based on national situation analyses and assessments;
- 2.3 Build capacity in digital health within the ministry of health and among health workforce as related to country priorities;
- 2.4 Allocate resources and encourage national investment into interoperable digital health systems at national and subnational levels;
- 2.5 Use digital health solutions for enhancing access to health services for underserved populations, priority diseases or needs, or in accordance with key national health outcomes;
- 2.6 Monitor progress in implementing the national digital health strategy and evaluate its impact in enhancing health outcomes, knowledge sharing and research projects in support of health policy-making on digital health;

3. REQUESTS the Regional Director to:

- 3.1 Enhance WHO capacity for technical support for implementation of the regional strategy for digital health;
- 3.2 Support countries in the development of national digital health strategies and action plans;
- 3.3 Provide a platform for sharing knowledge and experience about effective and efficient digital health strategies and implementation experiences as well as monitoring and evaluation criteria and approaches for enhancing wider implementation in countries of the Region;
- 3.4 Provide technical support to Member States and encourage the involvement of relevant United Nations agencies and stakeholders in digital health, such as the International Telecommunication Union (ITU);
- 3.5 Report on progress made in implementing the strategy to the 71st and 73rd sessions of the Regional Committee, and present a final report to the 75th session in 2028.