

PRESS RELEASE



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
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UNESCO, MUHAS and MoHCDGEC Partnership on Tele-medicine in support of Health Innovation in Tanzania

The Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children (MoHCDGEC), the Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS) and the UNESCO Dar es Salaam Office are coming together with other key partners on May 16, at MUHAS Campus, to design a pioneering concept for tele-medicine provision in a remote Maasai village in Arusha Region.

The partnership will advance the provision of quality specialist health care for rural and remote populations, which are often excluded from quality health provision. The envisaged concept of tele-medicine makes use of modern and digital technology, and its operationalization will provide a model for improved use of the 21st technologies in the advancement of health provision in the country and continent.

The pilot follows an intervention developed by the UNESCO Dar es Salaam Office with the support of Samsung and the district authorities of Ngorongoro which resulted in the establishment of a remote Digital Clinic, a live innovation platform for testing health services provision in maternal and infant care, dental and ENT services that utilize connectivity and smart technologies. The Digital Clinic was launched in Ololosokwan village in Ngorongoro, Arusha in November 2016.

The upcoming workshop will mark a second phase of the programme bringing together innovators, health professionals and technologists to elaborate the service concepts for a full operationalization of the pilot and regularization of remote health consultation services. New strategies and tools to connect the rural dispensary with the national and international health care and training resources will be explored to extend the outreach of specialized health care services to rural populations. The intervention is the first telehealth pilot connecting all levels of Tanzanian healthcare system providing a test case for integrating telehealth services within the Zonal health system in Tanzania. Special focus will also be given to support the development of the outreach component of the medical specialist professional development.

During the event, MUHAS and UNESCO will sign a Memorandum of Understanding to formalize the partnership around the Digital Village Health Innovation programme. And it marks also an important step in the operationalization of the Chair in Tele-Health granted to MUHAS recently by UNESCO.

The meeting will be officiated by the Permanent Secretary Health (MoHCDGEC), Dr Mpoki Ulisubisya, the Vice-Chancellor of MUHAS, Prof. Ephata Kaaya and the UNESCO Representative, Mrs. Zulmira Rodrigues. They will be joined by other personalities as the Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania, the Deputy Permanent Secretary Health to the Prime Minister's Office and the Director General COSTECH. In addition, individuals representing the Africa Foundation, the Aga Khan Foundation, the Swiss Embassy and the Bill & Melinda Gates foundation, as well as Regional and District Health Officials from Arusha and Ngorongoro will also participate.

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