

# Bridging connectivity and care: A DHALP success story from Zambia



DHALP Zambia second cohort. PATH/Daniel Ngandu.

The *Digital Health Applied Leadership Program (DHALP)* is a 6-month executive coaching program designed to prepare participants to successfully create and lead digital health transformation initiatives that strengthen health systems. Following the successful pilot, which trained 41 leaders from five countries, DHALP was expanded in 2025 to include Rwanda, Burkina Faso, and Zambia, engaging 60 mid-level digital health leaders. Participants apply the program's lessons directly within their institutions, translating knowledge into measurable systems change.

## Building Leadership at the Intersection of ICT and Health

In Zambia, DHALP participant Nina Sibonile Nkhuwa, a qualified Urban and Regional Planner with two decades of professional experience, has brought a unique perspective to digital transformation. Having served in various leadership roles within Local Government, and now as a Senior Projects Officer at the Zambia Information and Communications Technology Authority (ZICTA), Nina's work focuses on expanding ICT access to underserved communities through the Universal Access and Service Fund.

Through DHALP, Nina gained a deeper understanding of how digital health extends beyond technology and infrastructure, requiring strong leadership, stakeholder collaboration, and a systems-based approach. The program helped her connect her ICT expertise with health outcomes, recognizing that sustainable digital transformation depends on both connectivity and capacity.



“DHALP has helped me understand various aspects regarding Digital Health program and shaping me to be a better Leader that is considerate and aware of the surrounding environment and the various stakeholders we interact with.” - Nina Sibonile Nkhuwa

## Applying learning to strengthen health connectivity

Nina is already applying DHALP lessons in her role as Project Manager for the Universal Health Connect Project, implemented by ZICTA. This initiative aims to extend digital connectivity to health facilities across Zambia, ensuring that no community is left behind in the digital era.

Drawing on DHALP's principles of inclusive leadership and effective communication, Nina has improved stakeholder engagement mechanisms by helping to align diverse actors toward shared outcomes. By understanding stakeholder needs and motivations, she has reshaped the project rollout to be more collaborative, predictable, and impactful.

*“I am now inspired to further my knowledge in digital health with my eyes set on being a consultant in the digital health space.” - Nina Sibonile Nkhuwa*

## Looking to the future

Nina's participation in DHALP has inspired her to deepen her engagement in the digital health space. She envisions advancing her expertise through further training, professional certifications, and exposure to emerging innovations, building on the foundation DHALP has provided. Her ambition reflects a growing wave of leaders across Zambia who are ready to bridge the gap between ICT infrastructure and health service delivery.

This success story illustrates how DHALP is equipping leaders to integrate technology, policy, and people-centered design to create inclusive, data-driven health systems. As Zambia continues to invest in digital transformation, leaders like Nina are ensuring that progress extends beyond connectivity toward meaningful, equitable health impact for all.

As the second cohort ends, Nina can still engage with the Digital Health Applied Leadership Program (DHALP) Alumni Network, which connects graduates across Africa, extending learning and collaboration beyond the classroom. Its launch marks the start of a sustained movement of digital health leaders committed to advancing sustainable, interoperable, and equitable health systems across the continent.

[Learn more and explore other DHALP success stories.](#)



Zambia cohort session. PATH/Daniel Ngandu