



## **Data and innovation: draft global strategy on digital health**

*PATH statement at the 146<sup>th</sup> session of the World Health Organization Executive Board, 3-8 February 2020, Geneva, Switzerland*

Thank you Chair and distinguished delegates for the opportunity to comment. We are proud to see WHO's progress toward transforming its approach to health in the digital age under Dr. Tedros' leadership, and we are pleased to partner with WHO and member states on this effort. The current draft strategy is a strong start, but we would like to highlight a few key areas that are worthy of additional emphasis:

Alignment: The field of digital health has suffered from fragmented programs that are solely technology- or funder-driven. We encourage WHO to work with initiatives such as Digital Square, the Digital Health & Interoperability Working Group and the Global Digital Health Partnership to guide the effort to **catalyze and align** global support for country priorities and goals, and to lead the identification of proven technologies, tools, and approaches that can be leveraged to achieve them.

Countries also need actionable plans to coordinate investment in their digital and data transformation. Prioritized and costed **investment roadmaps** support country leaders in aligning and coordinating global partner investment behind each strategic priority. We also urge WHO to directly support the strengthening of capacities member states need to create strategies that express national goals—as well as road maps to align investment in those goals.

We are at the beginning of a new era of digital health data. New analytical techniques and interconnected systems are allowing deeper analysis and insights every day. WHO should consider digital and data together, through a singular **governance** approach. Working with the global community, in its authority as the normative body for health, WHO should establish model digital and data policies that consider all communities, protect individual privacy rights, yet also enable the world to leverage the power of digital and data to accelerate health progress through innovation.