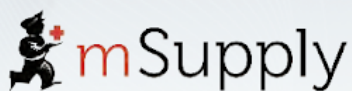


Hosted by BES and the mSupply Foundation

INDO-PACIFIC DIGITAL HEALTH USERS FORUM

28-30 August 2023 | Nalagi Hotel | Nadi, Fiji

Post-Event Report



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Image: Group photo on the final day of the Indo-Pacific Digital Health Users Forum 2023 in Nadi, Fiji

Acknowledgements:

- Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
- New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT)
- Hon. Dr. Ratu Atonio Rabici Lalabalavu, Minister of Health and Medical Services, Republic of Fiji
- Dr. Lucas de Toca PSM, First Assistant Secretary, Global Health Division, DFAT

Executive Summary

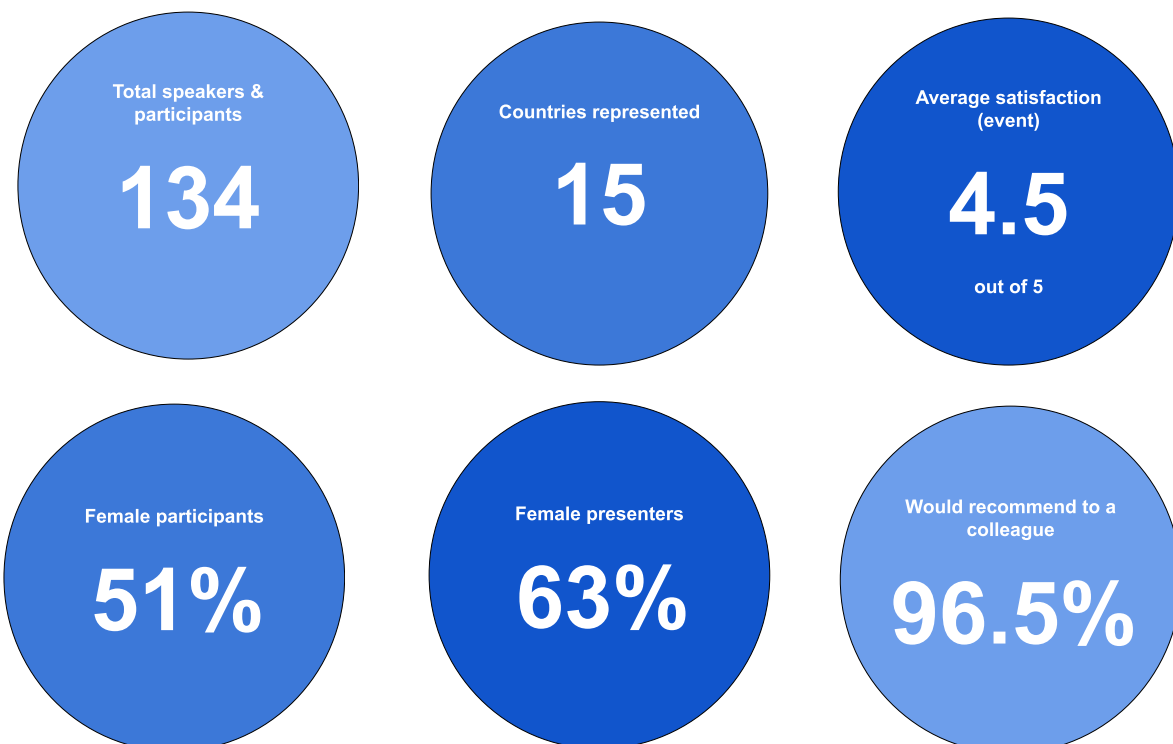
The inaugural Indo-Pacific Digital Health Users Forum was held on August 28th-30th, 2023 in Nadi, Fiji, bringing together the region's leading digital health experts and end users for the first time. Jointly hosted by BES and the mSupply Foundation, and sponsored by DFAT and MFAT, the forum hosted 134 speakers and participants from 15 countries and territories: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Australia and New Zealand. Development partners in attendance included representatives from DFAT, WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF, the Pacific Community (SPC), the Pacific Health Information Network (PHIN), and the Australian Institute of Health & Welfare (AIHW).

A selection of sessions was also live-streamed to an online audience, with 108 unique viewers joining across the 3 days (and a total of 10,654 viewing minutes online).

The forum focused on commonly used digital health solutions in the region, and included a series of presentations, case studies, feature demonstrations, technical masterclasses and keynote addresses. There was a focus on the use of digital health systems for electronic health records, health supply chains, laboratory information management, and public health data, with the overarching themes of integrated digital health systems, regional collaboration, and the use of data for decision-making.

Many presentations were recorded and are available for [viewing online](#).

The full program is available in Appendix 1.



Following the success of the inaugural Indo-Pacific Digital Health Users Forum, we propose to engage with other development partners in the digital health space and co-host this event annually.



Image: Hon. Dr. Ratu Atonio Rabici Lalabalavu (Minister of Health and Medical Services, Republic of Fiji) and Dr. Lucas de Toca PSM (First Assistant Secretary, Global Health Division, DFAT) pictured with delegates from Samoa at the Indo-Pacific Digital Health Users Forum 2023 in Nadi, Fiji



Image: Delegates in the main room of the Indo-Pacific Digital Health Users Forum 2023 in Nadi, Fiji

Background & Objectives

The Indo-Pacific Digital Health Users Forum provided an opportunity for delegates to share experiences of digital health systems with their regional counterparts, with a focus on open-source software.

This included practical experiences of implementation and use of:

- **mSupply**: A logistics management information system (LMIS) for health supply chains
- **Tamanu**: An electronic health record (EHR) providing a birth-to-death health record
- **SENAITE**: A laboratory information management system (LIMS) for management of laboratory workflows
- **Tupaia**: A data aggregation, analysis and visualisation platform that supports data for decision-making in public health
- **DHIS2**: The world's leading health information system (HIS)
- **OpenCRVS**: A civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) software



Image: Mr Jeremaia Mataika, Ms Moreen Devi and Mr Alexandro Naisara (Fiji Ministry of Health & Medical Services) with Ms Emily Porrello (BES) at a side panel at the Indo-Pacific Digital Health Users Forum 2023 in Nadi, Fiji

The forum hosted discussions around the larger cross-cutting issues related to digital health solutions such as integration, HL7FHIR and data standards. There was a focus on the interaction between these systems and other platforms in use across the Pacific including DHIS2 and OpenCRVS, and conversations on the overlaps between digital

health and related sectors, such as meteorology, disaster preparedness and resilience, and OneHealth.

Attendees were able to benefit from others' experience and lessons learned through formal presentations, case and country discussions and presentations, Q&A panels and informal networking. The overarching goal was to bring stakeholders from different sectors and disciplines and from across the Pacific to focus on digital health in the Pacific, including supply chains, data collection, data analysis and decision making.

Specifically the objectives were to:

- **Objective 1:** Share practical experiences of digital health implementations across the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Objective 2:** Increase knowledge about the open-source digital health tools available and commonly used in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Objective 3:** Facilitate regional collaboration by enhancing networking of peers in digital health across the Indo-Pacific region.



Image: Mr Whitney Joseph (Palau), Ms Vae Keppa (Nauru) and Ms Lenara Tupa'i-Fui (Samoa) with Ms Megan Lane (BES) at a panel discussion about keys to successful software implementation at the Indo-Pacific Digital Health Users Forum 2023 in Nadi, Fiji

Key Takeaways

Speaker and discussion highlights

A. Supply chain management:

"I learnt to understand mSupply more and appreciated a lot about very specific experience especially from the Fiji Team on how they use it with so much passion. I am more passionate about this and although I come from a small country of Tokelau I will do my best to reach such mSupply networking." - Attendee feedback

- There is a growing Pacific community of mSupply super users, with almost all countries and territories in the region using mSupply as their logistics management information system (LMIS) for health products
- Automated tracking of key indicators in the mSupply Dashboard is supporting Ministries of Health to target follow-up support, training and resources to strengthen health supply chains
- Some countries have recently adopted newer 'extensions' of mSupply, including the Health Supply Hub (an e-procurement platform) and Conformia (for medicines regulation)
- Full team approaches and inclusion across planning, coordination and implementation of LMIS and supply chain activities (e.g. stocktake) is critical
- Over the coming years, countries may transition from mSupply to the modernised open-source version, Open mSupply



Image: Warehouse staff from the Fiji Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Services Centre (Mr Samu Tuisavura and Mr Alexandro Naisara - centre) and the Solomon Islands National Medical Stores (Mr Cosmas Po'omu - left, and Mr Wesley Kukutu - right) make regional connections at the Indo-Pacific Digital Health Users Forum 2023 in Nadi, Fiji

B. Electronic Health Records (EHR)

“Digital Health is the way forward for better health management.” - Attendee feedback

- EHR tools for the Pacific must support ease of data access/use, be responsive to needs and user-friendly, recognise cultural and traditional practices, address population mobility challenges, consider gender and gender-based violence (GBV), and link with broader systems (for example, census and mapping data)
- Offline-first, sync-enabled and mobile solutions like Tamanu are facilitating community-based programs such as EPI, mass drug administration, and NCD screening.
- EHR tools for the Pacific like Tamanu will continue to evolve with the needs of end-users, and product roadmaps should be informed by the needs of Pacific Ministries of Health.

C. Data for decision-making

“Expanding use of digital tools in the region is critical to improve public health: a major challenge to their effective use is countries agreeing on how/what data they want to collect, report and share, building and maintaining the required capacities for support, and gaining acceptance of new tools from end users.” - Attendee feedback

- Common use of digital tools across the Pacific is facilitating regional support by multilateral organisations (e.g. UNFPA's use of aggregated country-level mSupply data in Tupaia)
- Data aggregation, analysis and visualisation platforms such as Tupaia are facilitating data for decision-making (e.g. the use of Tupaia for malaria resistance and vector surveillance in PNG)
- Data quality remains an issue - there must be tangible benefits for those required to enter data in order for them to use digital health systems, and for that data to be useful for decision-makers



Image: Dr Titilola Duro-Aina (UNFPA) presenting on digital health system data for regional decision-making at the Indo-Pacific Digital Health Users Forum 2023 in Nadi, Fiji

D. Interoperability

“Digital health systems must be integrated and speak to each other.” - Speaker quote

- Interoperability is one of the core principles of the WHO Global Strategy on Digital Health 2020-2025, and should always be pursued in Pacific digital health solutions
- Integration using the HL7 FHIR standard supports the modern, open, and free exchange of patient data between systems, facilities and even between countries. Whilst older versions of HL7 continue to be used by legacy software, FHIR is a new, modern standard that should be adopted by PICTs as their first preference wherever possible.
- National identification numbers are a critical step towards digital health system interoperability, and electronic Civil Registration & Vital Statistics (eCRVS) platforms can support this

E. General considerations

“Tools must be collaboratively co-designed, developed and supportively delivered to fit the country context (one size fits all doesn't work).” - Speaker quote

- The Pacific region has an opportunity to be global leaders in digital health, leapfrogging higher resourced contexts that are often hampered by legacy systems
- Several countries are implementing comprehensive, integrated digital health suites with a focus on open-source software
- Local partnerships and co-design are critical towards ownership and sustainability of digital health solutions in the Pacific
- Internet connectivity and infrastructure remain a challenge to digital health systems across many parts of the region
- Digital health strategy and policy are essential, and should continue to dynamically evolve with advancements to digital health tools



Image: Athena Matalavea (Samoa Ministry of Health) and Rumanusina Maua-Maualaivao (The Pacific Community) at the Indo-Pacific Digital Health Users Forum 2023 in Nadi, Fiji

Evaluation

A digital evaluation form was circulated at the closing session of the forum to obtain participant feedback on the program and event logistics. The following feedback reflects how the forum achieved its initial objectives.



Image: Lenara Tupa'i-Fui (Samoa Ministry of Health, and PHIN Chair) presenting on Samoa's digital health experience at the Indo-Pacific Digital Health Users Forum 2023 in Nadi, Fiji

Objective 1: Share practical experiences of digital health implementations across the Indo-Pacific region.

- "Learned from **other country experiences**. Features from other softwares that we would like to adopt and improve the current apps we are using."
- "Overall in my opinion the forum itself was a success. Insights from other participants (their **pros and cons** using the various systems mentioned) really helped us get **ideas** on how we can improve certain processes in our own country/health departments."

Objective 2: Increase knowledge about the open-source digital health tools available and commonly used in the Indo-Pacific region.

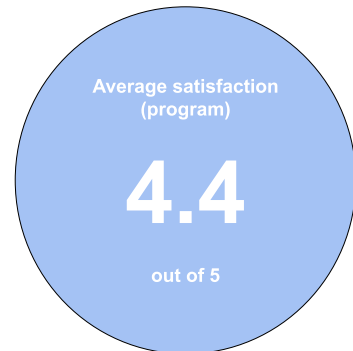
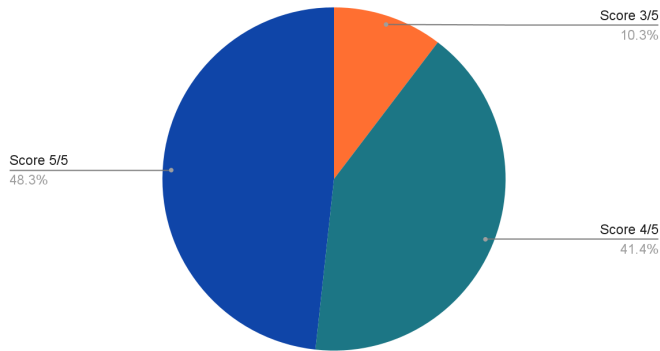
- "**Scale** of digital health tools in use across the Pacific. The feeling of there being a community of practice around digital health that can facilitate **country to country knowledge sharing** and the potential to see the Pacific become a **global leader** in the space."
- "The importance of **fit for purpose open-source software** in pacific health systems and also the importance of country **ownership** and regular **capacity building** towards the sustainability of digital health systems"

Objective 3: Facilitate regional collaboration by enhancing networking of peers in digital health across the Indo-Pacific region.

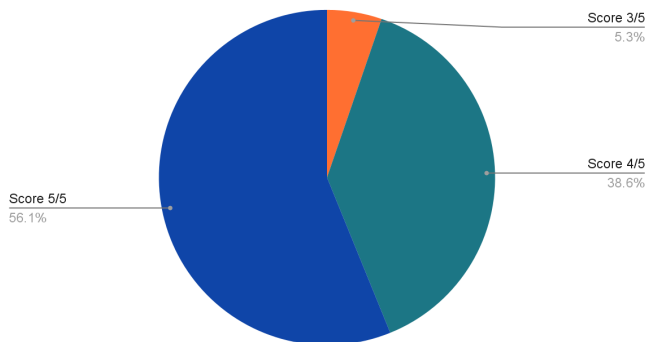
- "Awesome workshop, **a lot of opportunities to learn from one another and network**, let this be like our Ocean's current - don't stop moving..."
- "I just want to take the opportunity and thank the sponsors of this forum for the invitation, I really enjoyed it and **I learn more from other pacific islands**."
- "Wonderful initiative and hoping for continuous **annual** forums to share knowledge and experiences with each other."

Feedback highlights

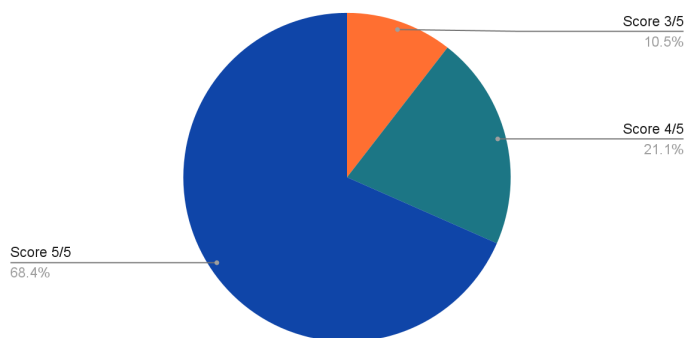
How satisfied were you with the overall program?



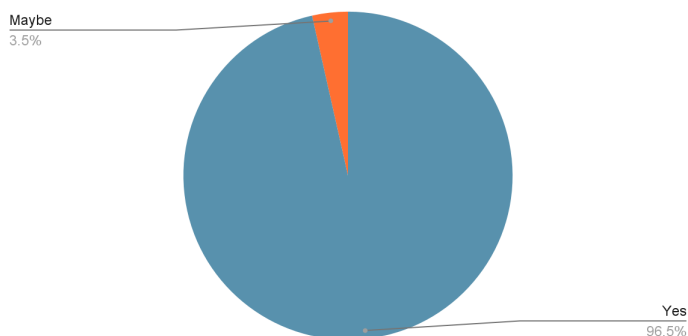
How satisfied were you with the event?



How helpful do you think the forum was to your professional role?



Would you recommend the Indo-Pacific Digital Health Users Forum to your colleagues?



Appendix 1: Detailed Agenda

	Main room	Breakout room 1	Breakout room 2	
DAY 1 INDO-PACIFIC DIGITAL HEALTH USERS FORUM	9am - 9:30am Registration			
	9:30am - 9:45am	Welcome and introduction		
	9:45am - 10:15am	Keynote address Hon. Dr Atonio Rabici Lalabalavu, Minister for Health, Republic of Fiji		
	10:15am - 11am	Keynote address Dr Lucas de Toca, First Ass. Sec. Global Health Division, DFAT		
	11am - 11:15am Morning tea			
	11:15am - 12pm	Plenary: Digital health in the Pacific Emily Porrello, Head of Programs, BES		
	12pm - 12:30pm	Why digital health projects fail (and why they succeed) Dr Michael Nunan, CEO, BES		
	12:30pm - 1:30pm Lunch			
	1:30pm - 2pm	Digitising procurement using Health Supply Hub and the mSupply Tender Module Ralph Mario (Fiji), Chloe Dimock (BES)	UNFPA Case Study: Using Tupaia for Pacific regional projects and collaboration Dr Titilola Duro-Aino (UNFPA), Josephine Chu (UNFPA), Lenara Tupa'i-fui (Samoa)	Tamanu development pipeline: What's coming up? Megan Lane (BES)
	2pm - 2:30pm			Tamanu Case Study: Aspen Medical in Fiji Shivnay Naidu (Aspen Medical)
	2:30pm - 3:30pm	Back to basics: survey-based data collection case studies Vinaisi Bechu (Fiji Mass Drug Administration), Safiya Nur (Fiji Facility Surveys)	Conforma: Digitisation of medicines registration in Fiji Emi Lewatoro (Fiji), Jessica Jago (TMF)	
	3:30pm - 4pm Afternoon tea			
	4pm - 4:45pm	Interactive Workshop: Quantification for health commodities using mSupply data and other sources Chloe Dimock (BES)	STRIVE PNG: Malaria resistance and vector surveillance Marie Elliott (STRIVE), Sam McEwen (STRIVE)	Tamanu vaccines module Dr Christine Lifuka Alopua (Tuvalu), Teuila Pati (Samoa)
	5pm	Welcome to Fiji: Kava session, Nalagi Hotel rooftop		

	Main room	Breakout room 1	Breakout room 2
8:30am - 9am	Arrival		
9am - 9:15am	Welcome to Day 2		
9:15am - 10am	PHIN introduction and the Samoa digital health experience Lenara Tupa'i-fui, Chair of Pacific Health Information Network		
10am - 10:45am	Pacific Health Information Support Centre establishment Vicki Bennett, Unit Head MIMCU, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), Kate Spyby, Senior Project Manager (AIHW)		
10:45am - 11am	Morning tea		
11am - 11:45am	OpenCRVS and its links with digital health John Morley, Associate Director, Plan International Australia		
11:45am - 12:30pm	Crowd-sourced syndromic surveillance Dr Craig Dalton, Flutracking.net and University of Newcastle		
12:30pm - 1:30pm	Lunch		
1:30pm - 2:30pm	Rolling out national screening programs Athena Matalavea (NCD screening/PEN Fa'a, Samoa), Grace Namaduk (Schools screening, Nauru)	mSupply Master Class: Stocktakes and managing expiring stock Alexandro Naisara (Fiji), Liokeno Debao (Nauru)	
2:30pm - 3pm	The complexities of data management: Lessons learned and best practices Anaseini Ratu (WISH Fiji), Marie Elliott (STRIVE), Juliana Mitchell-Wong (BES), facilitated by Timoci Naivalulevu (FNU)	mSupply Master Class: Pharmacy dispensary experiences and practical tips Moreen Devi (Fiji), Indella Stephen (Nauru)	
3pm - 3:30pm	Help design the future of Tupaia: What's on our roadmap and what's missing? Georgia Lack (BES)		
3:30pm - 4pm	Afternoon tea		
4pm - 4:45pm	Panel: Keys to successful digital health software implementation Vae Keppa (Nauru), Whitney Joseph (Palau), Lenara Tupa'i-fui (Samoa), Shivnay Naidu (Aspen Medical), moderated by Megan Lane (BES)	mSupply Master Class: mSupply data for decision-making and support for health supply chains Alexandro Naisara (Fiji), Safiya Nur (BES)	

DAY 2
INDO-PACIFIC DIGITAL HEALTH USERS FORUM

DAY 3
INDO-PACIFIC DIGITAL HEALTH USERS FORUM

	Main room	Breakout room 1	Breakout room 2
8:30am - 9am	Arrival		
9am - 9:15am	Welcome to Day 3		
9:15am - 10am	Keynote address: Open-source digital health tools Dhanya Herath, Operations Lead, mSupply Foundation		
10am - 10:45am	FHIR: Open data standards transforming healthcare IT Grahame Grieve, FHIR Product Director, Fellow of the Australian College of Healthcare Informatics, Director, Health Intersections		
10:45am - 11am	Morning tea		
11am - 11:45am	Keynote address: SPC's support for digital health in the region Sunia Soakai, Deputy Director, Public Health Division, The Pacific Community (SPC)		
11:45am - 12:30pm	Telegastroenterology in the Pacific Chris Hair, ANZGITA		
12:30pm - 1:30pm	Lunch		
1:30pm - 2pm	Open mSupply: Demonstration, lessons from implementation, and development roadmap Roxy Dao and Carl Smith (mSupply Foundation)	Digital platforms in Pacific laboratory settings Navin Karan (VIDRL)	ICD coding and diagnosing in digital systems: Panel discussion and planning session Rumanusina Maua-Maualaivao (SPC), Vicki Bennett (AIHW), Tim Drown (BES), moderated by Dr Rachel Devi (Fiji)
2pm - 2:30pm		Demonstration: Senaite Sahar Etesam (BES)	
2:30pm - 3pm	What's on the horizon? Machine learning for better quantification, alerting and barcoding Craig Drown (mSupply Foundation)		Facility Case Study: Belau National Hospital, Palau Whitney Joseph (BES)
3pm - 3:15pm	Afternoon tea		
3:15pm - 4pm	Digital health software implementation: interactive knowledge-sharing Moderated by Georgia Lack (BES) and Megan Lane (BES)		
4pm - 4:15pm	Forum close		
5pm - 7pm	Closing drinks, Nalagi Hotel rooftop		