

A Case Study of The DREAMS Partnership in Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe

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Executive Summary

Standards-based and interoperable data systems are critical for effective delivery of healthcare services. DREAMS (Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored and Safe) is a partnership led by the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). The initiative is committed to helping adolescent girls and young women develop into determined, resilient, empowered, AIDS-free, mentored, and safe women. The DREAMS initiative aims to do so, in part by building diverse sources of multiple, multi-layered healthcare services intended to holistically benefit an individual.

The Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data and PEPFAR identified the PEPFAR DREAMS partnership as a good example of significant experimentation, across multiple countries, in the use of interoperability for tracking delivery of layered services for adolescent girls and young women. "Joining up Health Data: A Case Study of the DREAMS Partnership in Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe" aims to distill good practices in developing and implementing interoperable data systems at the program level. The key findings from this case study further support the emerging evidence, case for, and promise of digital health interventions that have continued to demonstrate their efficacy and effectiveness in improving health outcomes. These outcomes include expanding equity and access to healthcare services while lowering costs and increasing quality in existing complex health systems.

The following key findings reinforced the critical role of interoperable digital health interventions and provided the following insights;

1. The role of effective leadership and governance from government, complemented by partnerships with development and implementing partners functioning within an enabling policy and regulatory framework, was critical in the success of the DREAMS data systems in Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.
2. Availability of competent human capacity had a significant positive influence on the DREAMS

program. When programs were adequately resourced to support, maintain, and use the DREAMS data system as a critical health intervention in delivery of the DREAMS health service packages, outcomes improved

3. It was notable that the three countries are all using DREAMS electronic data systems powered by global goods¹ that were clearly recognized as significantly contributing to achievement of the overall DREAMS program health goals. The effectiveness of tracking adolescent girls and young women who received diverse and appropriately layered services they are eligible for, across organizations and geographies, required the maturity attributes found in global goods.

The study also revealed the need to have functional unique health identification services, and co-existing paper and electronic data systems along the maturity pathway to a fully paperless system. Additionally, the study found significant benefits accruable from an observed synergy between the DREAMS beneficiaries and orphans and vulnerable children. This further demonstrates the broader health impacts of cross-sectoral interoperability that enable seamless collaboration between interventions targeting social determinants of health

In conclusion, while standards-based, meaningfully interoperable digital health solutions are clearly and demonstrably important for supporting the DREAMS initiative, a progressive, maturity-based approach guided by validated maturity models, is critical to effectively implementing and using digital health solutions to support complex multi-service, multi-layered health service delivery programs.

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¹ static1.squarespace.com/static/59bc3457ccc5c5890fe7cacd/t/5ced6f3c7817f7e261ddbc0a/1559064401781/Global-Goods-Guidebook_V1.pdf