

## **INTEGRATION OF HEALTHCARE INFORMATION USING ICT - CHALLENGES AHEAD OF LEBANON AND BELARUS**

Developing countries are working their way into being information societies and digital economies. We are dealing with internal factors in each developing country to provide requirements for information society. The health sector is an important component of the information society, and the automation of its processes has made a lot of improvement, but the level of development differs from one country to another. With using ICT in saving data by specialized software, data is more accessible inside one institute. Yet the patient can access multiple health institutes, and deal with many guarantors, creating multiple records and files, so health information must be more integrated to unify each patient health records, and improve access, retrieval, while preserving health information privacy, and allowing the supervision of the ministry and public authorities to preserve integrity.

We are making a comparative analysis of the situation of two developing countries that are trying to automate health processes and integrate health information using ICT, Lebanon and Belarus, that have many things in common, yet some differences. The study of their demographic and health structure showed some resemblance between the two countries. The problems facing the integration of health data are assessed in each country. The problems studied are:

- no unique patient identity that must be implemented to prohibit multiple records and files for the same patient,
- Funding problems that are hindering the primary solution, they should be available to start gaining financial and social results.
- Political instability, that impedes the implementation of such long term projects, that should be away from politics.
- Inequality of ICT knowledge and awareness: fear of different knowledge levels among citizens when using a unified ICT solution.
- Incompatible infrastructure: such solution needs accompanying necessary infrastructure requirements. This is essential.
- Resistance of change: such solutions are resisted by stakeholders that benefit from the current status, or fear from new ideas.
- Weak legal and regulatory environment: that should accompany nationwide solution, enforcement and abiding.

Although the situation in Belarus is better than Lebanon, yet all these factors need to be improved and made fully available, before thinking of success regarding feasible integration of health data using ICT.