

## Supplementary Appendix – Reflexivity Statement

### 1. How does this study address local research and policy priorities?

This study was conducted as part of the first author (TMM)'s Master's thesis in public health (orientation: health systems and disease control) at the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM) of Antwerp in Belgium. It comes in continuation of other activities developed by the *Centre National de Formation et de Recherche en Santé Rurale de Maferinyah* in Guinea on learning health systems (LHS) for response to infectious disease outbreaks<sup>1,2</sup>. The lack of knowledge use (a learning aspect) for policy- and decision-making is a key challenge of the domestic health system<sup>3,4,5</sup>. The current study provided actionable recommendations on how learning can be promoted within the health system.

### 2. How were local researchers involved in study design?

The core idea was proposed by BM and then elaborated through a discussion between BM, TMM and AD. TMM took forward the idea for his thesis, and brought the methodology strategy, with inputs from a lecturer in the ITM Master's degree (MG) and the thesis supervisor (WVP).

### 3. How has funding been used to support the local research team?

This question is not applicable, as the study was not funded.

### 4. How are research staff who conducted data collection acknowledged?

TMM conducted the data collection. However, the staff who facilitated the online survey by reminding participants through phone calls to fill in the questionnaire or by clarifying certain information was acknowledged (cf. acknowledgements). The online survey facilitators who contributed to the writing of the thesis or the manuscript were included as co-authors (SS and AHB).

### 5. Do all members of the research partnership have access to study data?

All data generated or analysed during this study are included within the manuscript. The survey questionnaire and dataset are with TMM; they could be shared with other co-others if needed.

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<sup>1</sup> District.Team. Mobilisation 2.0 des équipes cadres de district. Available from: <http://guinee.district.team/>

<sup>2</sup> Keugoung B, Bello KOA, Millimouno TM, Sidibé S, Dossou JP, Delamou A, et al. Mobilizing health district management teams through digital tools: Lessons from the District.Team initiative in Benin and Guinea using an action research methodology. *Learn Heal Syst.* 2020;5(4):e10244. DOI:10.1002/lrh2.10244

<sup>3</sup> Politique Nationale de Santé, Guinée, 2014

<sup>4</sup> Plan National de Développement Sanitaire, Guinée, 2015-2024

<sup>5</sup> Plan Stratégique de la Direction Nationale de l'Épidémiologie et de la Lutte Contre la Maladie, Guinée, 2022-2026

**6. How was data used to develop analytical skills within the partnership?**

The research has allowed TMM to apply methods he has learned during his MPH study, but also to demonstrate autonomy and rigour in the application of the acquired knowledge (for academic purposes).

**7. How have research partners collaborated in interpreting study data?**

TMM interpreted all the data, but he benefited from inputs from ITM co-authors during the writing of his thesis and BM at different stages of the study.

**8. How were research partners supported to develop writing skills?**

The development of writing skills was supported by research partners mainly through the writing of the thesis and then the paper.

**9. How will research products be shared to address local needs?**

The findings of this study were presented at ITM in the form of a Master thesis defence on 5 July 2022. They were also presented at Guinea's second public health conference held on 25-26 October 2022. In addition, a policy brief will be elaborated to inform policy- and decision-makers about why it is crucial to advance learning within Guinea's health system and how an LHS can be built in Guinea. Finally, a webinar will be organised to broadly disseminate the findings of this study locally by targeting study participants (health committee members, district management teams, regional health inspectors, central level staff, and partners) and a wider public (policy- and decision-makers, practitioners, lecturers, researchers, and students of the Master of Public Health at the Gamal Abdel Nasser University of Conakry/Guinea).

**10. How is the leadership, contribution and ownership of this work by LMIC researchers recognised within the authorship?**

Authors TMM and AD have been recognised as the first and last authors, respectively. Also, the authorship is equally distributed between local researchers (five) and external researchers (five). However, it is noteworthy that the LHS issue is one on which TMM and BM have been collaborating for several years, with a shared passion for the questions raised and the understanding that learning is a priority for health systems strengthening and Guinea. This article marks TMM's ambition to advance the shared agenda on LHS beyond the strict obtention of his MPH degree, and there is a consensus that this work is, first and foremost, TMM's achievement. The partnership and broad authorship reflect the fruitful collaboration between a student and his teachers, on the one hand, and his collaborators in the home country, on the other hand.

**11. How have early career researchers across the partnership been included within the authorship team?**

TMM designed the research protocol, monitored the online survey, analysed and interpreted both the review and survey findings, wrote the thesis and drafted the first manuscript. BSC contributed to the reports' selection and appraisal, the writing of the thesis and the manuscript.

**12. How has gender balance been addressed within the authorship?**

Eight authors are male (TMM, BM, WVP, MG, BSC, SS, AHB and AD) and two authors female (AK and TD)

**13. How has the project contributed to training of LMIC researchers?**

Mainly through the thesis writing

**14. How has the project contributed to improvements in local infrastructure?**

Not applicable

**15. What safeguarding procedures were used to protect local study participants and researchers?**

Regarding study participants, we have considered the issue of safeguarding in the manuscript (cf. ethical considerations). As for local study researchers, the question is not directly applicable, as data collection was conducted online.