

The Road Ahead

The goal of the four-week *Making the eHealth Connection* conference was to foster partnerships among groups of thoughtful, committed participants—many of whom were from the developing world—and to help them establish frameworks and agreements that will advance health systems by enabling a global eHealth movement. With many new ideas sparked and strong ties formed among conference participants, most of whom had never met or collaborated before, the outcomes of the conference will inform both national and international eHealth agendas for years to come.

Many seeds for new partnership, business, funding and policy models grew out of conference conversations. Each day these new ideas are propelling eHealth and better health systems forward. Two imperatives were mentioned most ardently and frequently by conference participants from all professional walks of life:

- ▶ The need to move from silos to systems—seeking out person-centered, user-driven, integrated, collaborative, sustainable, scalable, reusable and in-country demand-driven eHealth solutions
- ▶ The need to be daring in eHealth visions for the developing world, realizing that much can be done with limited resources and a lot of ingenuity

By turning these ideas into practice, the eHealth movement truly can be a great equalizer between rich and poor, healthy and ill. We are already seeing examples of how the thoughtful implementation of eHealth around the world is leading to improved health systems and health, particularly for emerging economies.

As *Making the eHealth Connection* participant Nolwazi Gasa of the Development Bank of Southern Africa so eloquently put it during her time at the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center conference, “The cost of doing nothing on eHealth is far greater than the cost of doing something. Be a facilitator and owner of the process.”