

## BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS: AN INTERVIEW WITH BOEHRINGER INGELHEIM EXECUTIVE IN RESIDENCE MOHAMED BAYOUMY



The EiR (Executive in Residence) is an initiative under Making More Health for Boehringer Ingelheim designed to encourage employees to explore, think out-of-the-box and find more innovative solutions to support the healthcare community within different market dynamics.

The program's purpose is to give the EiR the opportunity to gain insights into innovative problems-solving approaches that address healthcare challenges on a global level, understanding complex situations within the health care from multiple perspectives with an intercultural mindset.

EiR was established through a partnership with Ashoka, the world's largest network of social entrepreneur. The program, which can take from 2 weeks to 3 months, is a unique learning experience built around working locally with a leading social entrepreneur, a Making More Health or Ashoka Fellow.

Mohamed Bayoumy, KSA Country Head, representing the NEMEA region is the first META EiR and is currently working on iSikCure® program with our fellow, Moka Lantum in Nairobi, Kenya. Having started his assignment in December 2016, Bayoumy connected with us to tell us more about the program and his experiences, as his journey draws to a close.

**We're excited to hear more about iSikCure®, but before we come to that, tell us about your experience so far.**

This has been a very interesting personal experience; everything is new and different for me including culture, habits, values, way of thinking, traffic, weather, and nature; but the most amazing part for me personally has been Kenya's people, weather and breathtaking nature - it's so green! I've really had the chance to immerse myself into the local culture and I have even picked up some "Suhaily" - like "Hakuna Matata" meaning "No problem" J

**And from the perspective as an EiR? How has this assignment helped you professionally?**

Needless to say, the benefits have been numerous. To begin with the exposure to innovative and result-driven approaches that place the patient at the center of care. I had the opportunity to really dig deeper and gain insight into emerging models that create an enabling environment (i.e. infrastructure) for healthcare and access to safe and reliable drugs. I experienced, first hand, the impact of social entrepreneurship and how utilizing this knowledge re-shapes engagement within the global health ecosystem, such as the ability to execute new and creative ideas.

And there's more – for instance, how to address the needs of a population bound by economical and geographical based constraints, their demands for healthcare services and overcoming challenges to deliver significant results in a short timeframe.

**So, tell us more about the project you have been working on.**

It all began in December 2015, when Moka and BI Team Members conceptualized iSikCure® during a MMH co-creation workshop in Kenya. iSikCure® is a mobile solution designed for emerging markets to connect patients to their care and ensure that care received is safe, affordable and the best quality. Available on Android and Apple, the app is for any individual, household or institution, seeking a convenient way to gain access to and control the quality and costs of healthcare services for patients with non-communicable diseases. iSikCure® is a population-level intervention that targets large percentage of citizens, rural, peri-urban and urban alike, with limited resources for diagnostics and treatments. It tracks users' healthy



behaviors and converts their preventative activities into savings, which can then be used to purchase healthcare services at preferred rates.

iSikCure® is easy to use and helps earn MedPoints by adhering to recommended primary and preventive care practices and treatment. The MedPoints count toward discounts for prescriptions and services available at qualified locations, including wellness centers. Pharmacies and doctors' offices on the iSikCure® network can directly order drugs from the leading large wholesalers in Kenya, making access to drugs affordable and safe. Clinics on iSikCure® will be able to offer users bundled services, including essential tests and medicines, at discounted rates.

To test it, the team ran a coupon program in the clinic setting to increase adherence to treatment and healthy behaviors. The pilot period helped us understand the impact of iSikCure® on unmet needs, behavior change and adherence of the hypertension and diabetic patients. It also provided more clarity on the cost of care and drug sales, and how patient self-reporting analysis would enable us to track the impact of iSikCure® on health outcomes.

#### **What was your role in iSikCure®?**

As an iSikCure® EIR, my role was to support the sales and marketing (outreach) strategy, specifically to build a wholesaler network around iSikCure®. I applied my knowledge in product launching, sales strategies, product development experience, and basic skills in marketing. I analyze market opportunities, and develop and execute plans to increase sales and marketing efforts.

#### **How will iSikCure® help the community and patient population?**

Let me elaborate on the situation here in Kenya. Access is an issue along with affordability of care that is reflected in the unmet demand for medicines in East Africa. This is due to multiple complications such as unsafe medicines, counterfeit and variable drug costs.

iSikCure® not only connects patients to the right healthcare services, but also to ensure that care received is safe, affordable and of the best quality.

In my opinion, this can be a real game changer in Kenya's healthcare system by providing convenient, trustworthy, and a fully integrated solution to patients, healthcare providers, distributors and wholesalers, as well as employers.

For the patient, it will improve access to point-of-care diagnoses instead of over-the-counter self-medication or pharmacy-driven treatment. It will also improve access to quality medicines at lower costs and exposure to price volatility, reduced waiting times in doctors' offices, reduce the need to visit multiple facilities to locate providers or medicines, and finally improve adherence to care for immunization, ANC and chronic conditions.

#### **What are the benefits that BI might gain from this project?**

iSikCure® will strengthen Boehringer-Ingelheim's positioning in the Kenyan market through a product that goes "beyond the pill". Through the iSikCure® model, BI expects increased screening for NCDs and increased adherence, which will convert to increased demand and sales of drugs for diabetes and hypertension. It will also translate to increased loyalty among the company's channels by offering wholesalers and pharmacists an IT solution that directly connects them to their customer base and increases drug safety, access and affordability. iSikCure® will boost the BI brand positioning via the MedPoints coupon program and offers access to de-identified data to track consumption and enhances forecasting.

By the end of 2017, we aim to reach 20% of Kenyan private healthcare facilities and 14% of households, partner with two large distributors to increase access to a wide range of medicines for NCDs, prioritizing low volume, high margin medications and achieve an effective use rate of 4%. i.e. households that routinely use iSikCure® to track adherence, purchase medicines and schedule visits.

#### **How will you evaluate the success of the project?**

The success of the project is measured by feedback to determine customer interest, adoption and ease of use. We will evaluate the project at each key phase – the pilot, after launch and on-going monitoring.

During the two-week pilot phase we evaluated success through a survey conducted face-to-face or over the phone with all the participants, which include five physicians, 50 households, 5 pharmacies and 1 distributor.



After the launch of iSikCure®, a customer service call center will determine customer satisfaction and project success, collate feedback as well as help us address any issues promptly.

We will then continue to monitor key parameters such as downloads among different healthcare stakeholder (patient, physician, pharmacist, laboratory and distributor) and compare this to screening rates for NCDs and patient's adherence to medications of diabetes and hypertension over the same period of time to determine the impact.

**What are the challenges faced within the project and how did you overcome them?**

We did face some challenges within the project like technical glitches which we are solving before we go live to ensure customers' satisfaction and easy use. In addition, there were some delays in some legal approvals like trade mark, copy rights and terms & conditions.

However, it is key for me to highlight the great support and regular guidance from my mentors in the global team, Simon Manyara and Matthias Fuchs, Strategy/Portfolio Management from BI who helped resolve issues and drive the project forward.

**What was it like working with a MMH Fellow?**

It is an amazing experience working with such a talented and driven individual who is so focused on using innovative thinking and technology to reshape the healthcare industry to better serve patients and healthcare providers. Technology has so many applications in healthcare with plenty of opportunities for the pharma industry and working with the MMH Fellows really increased my awareness and changed my perspective.

**What learnings will you take back with you to Saudi Arabia?**

iSikCure® has the potential to be implemented in all emerging markets, including Saudi Arabia. We already know that the people are digitally-enabled and continuously seek and consume health-related services from a variety of channels and sources. They have already adopted many digital solutions that impact their daily lives, like Uber for example, and as of now there are no solutions like iSikCure® that could add value to the current healthcare system. Of course, we need to first assess the situation, conduct market analysis and calculate the value proposition. Being innovative when addressing needs, this mindset alone, is one of the key learnings I will take forward with me.

**Would you recommend assignments like this to your colleagues?**

Definitely! I strongly recommend opening up more opportunities like this to colleagues, to accelerate their development and enhance their skills so they are better equipped to build a better future for BI.

**So if you had another chance, would you do it?**

Absolutely! It's always an extremely satisfying feeling when you get to make a positive difference to people's lives through innovative solutions for patients and at the same time impact the company's business, both in the short-term and long-term.

**Thank you Bayoumy, for your time and for your efforts as an EiR.**

My pleasure!