



A Scoping Review of Digital Health Integration in Urban Congolese Medicine: An African Perspective

Jean-Baptiste Nkouka¹

¹ Department of Public Health, Marien Ngouabi University, Brazzaville

Published: 19 June 2004 | **Received:** 18 March 2004 | **Accepted:** 16 May 2004

Correspondence: jnkouka@hotmail.com

DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18538676](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18538676)

Author notes

Jean-Baptiste Nkouka is affiliated with Department of Public Health, Marien Ngouabi University, Brazzaville and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.

Abstract

The digitalisation of healthcare is a global phenomenon, but its integration within specific African urban contexts remains poorly documented. This is pertinent to the Republic of Congo, where urban medical practice encounters distinct challenges and opportunities for digital transformation. This scoping review aimed to map the extant literature on digital health integration within urban Congolese medicine. Its objectives were to identify the types of digital tools described, their clinical applications, and the reported barriers and facilitators to their implementation. A scoping review was conducted following established methodological frameworks. Systematic searches were performed in relevant electronic databases. Included sources comprised peer-reviewed articles and grey literature reporting on digital health in urban Congolese medical practice. Data were extracted and analysed thematically. The review identified a limited but growing body of literature. Findings indicate a predominant focus on mobile health (mHealth) applications, particularly for maternal health and infectious disease surveillance. A central theme was the critical importance of stable infrastructure, notably reliable electricity and internet connectivity, as a foundational requirement. Reported barriers to implementation frequently outweighed described facilitators. Digital health integration in urban Congolese medicine is an emerging field, with a clear concentration on specific tool types and health areas. Successful adoption appears contingent on addressing fundamental infrastructural and resource constraints alongside technological deployment. Future research should employ robust study designs to evaluate effectiveness and cost-benefit. Policy efforts must prioritise strengthening core infrastructure. Implementation strategies should be co-designed with local healthcare workers to ensure relevance and long-term sustainability. Digital health, mHealth, Republic of Congo, urban health, scoping review, implementation, Africa. This review consolidates the current evidence on digital health in urban Congo, providing a foundational map for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners working on digitalisation in similar African urban settings.

Keywords: *Digital health, telemedicine, urban health, Sub-Saharan Africa, healthcare systems, scoping review, Republic of Congo*

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