DTH-Lab: Frequently asked questions

1. <u>What is the DTH-Lab?</u>

The Digital Transformations for Health Lab (DTH-Lab) is a global consortium of partners working to drive implementation of the *Lancet* and *Financial Times* Commission on Governing Health Futures 2030's recommendations for value-based and youth-centred digital transformations for health at global and national levels.

The DTH-Lab's vision for 2030 is that digital transformations are led by Health for All values and enable digital first health systems to deliver equitable benefits for the health, well-being and safety of young people and their communities.

2. <u>Why has the DTH-Lab been established?</u>

In October 2021, the *Lancet* and *Financial Times* Commission on Governing health futures 2030: Growing up in a digital world (GHFutures2030) published a [report](#) which examines how our health and well-being is being directly and indirectly transformed by digitalisation. The Commission's analysis highlighted the impact of digital transformations on young people, a group that is typically more connected than older populations but whose health and well-being is seldom considered in the design and governance of digital innovations.

The report proposes a new vision for the governance of digital transformations and data: one that moves away from current models of commercialisation and data extraction, and towards public purpose, data solidarity and universal health coverage (UHC).

Two years since the publication of the Commission's report, the full potential of digitalisation for health is not being realised because of digital divides, power imbalances in the digital health ecosystem, and persistent societal inequalities. Furthermore, uncoordinated approaches to digital transformation and weak governance are exacerbating health inequities, failing to protect people from digital harms, and undermining public trust in digital solutions and data.

Action is required to translate the Commission's recommendations and conceptual ideas into implementable solutions. The DTH-Lab's mission is to make the Commission's recommendations tangible for decision-makers and to catalyse a whole-of-society effort towards their application, particularly in countries with large populations of young people.

3. <u>What is the DTH-Lab going to work on?</u>

In line with the GHFutures2030 Commission's report, the DTH-Lab's **vision** for 2030 is that digital transformations are led by Health for All values and enable digital first health systems to deliver equitable benefits for the health, well-being and safety of young people and their communities.

During its first phase (July 2023 to December 2026), the DTH-Lab's work will be implemented through three workstreams which are aligned with the Commission's recommendations. Youth will play a major role within each workstream and the Lab will focus on driving changes in countries with large youth populations.

DTH-Lab workstreams:

1. Putting young people at the centre of digital first health systems.
2. Advancing value-driven approaches to digital transformations for health.
3. Addressing the digital determinants of health and well-being.

4. <u>What's the relationship between the DTH-Lab and the Lancet and Financial Times Commission?</u>

Typically lasting 2-3 years, *Lancet* Commissions bring together a group of experts and advocates from different disciplines and sectors to develop a novel, transformational response to a burning or neglected area of global health, culminating in a report published in *The Lancet* that includes recommendations for key stakeholders and calls for sustained action and change in policy and practice.

The joint *Lancet* and *Financial Times* Commission on Governing health futures 2030: Growing up in a digital world (GHFutures2030) concluded its work in October 2021 with the publication of its report. However, the Commission's co-chairs, commissioners and partners were keen that the work should not end there. The DTH-Lab was therefore established to enable the Commission's research and analysis to continue and to drive implementation of its recommendations.

5. <u>How will the Lab's approach differ to that of the Commission?</u>

A lab approach has been selected because addressing the challenges identified in the Commission's report will require continuous experimentation, innovation and adaptation. The DTH-Lab will be a dynamic space for collaborative thinking and co-creating equitable and sustainable health futures. It will bring young people together with policymakers, technology companies and other stakeholders to design trusted digital first health systems that are supported by value-based governance and action to address the digital determinants of health. Unlike a *Lancet* Commission, the DTH-Lab will be able to establish partnerships with private sector actors.

6. <u>How will the DTH-Lab support implementation of the Commission's recommendations?</u>

Realising the Commission's ambitious recommendations requires an urgent and multi-faceted approach. The DTH-Lab's activities will therefore follow a six-step pathway to impact across its three workstreams:

- Issue identification - Continue to identify with young people the areas they prioritise to ensure their health and well-being through digital solutions and the policy changes required to do so equitably and safely.
- Knowledge generation - Analyse existing evidence and identify knowledge gaps on the effects of digital transformations (and digital divides) on young people's health and well-being and the impact of different governance approaches in countries with large youth populations.
- Design solutions - Facilitate the co-design of digital first health systems and value-based governance. Convene young people, experts, policymakers and other

groups to develop policy solutions and approaches that respond to young people's needs and are tailored to specific contexts.

- Test new approaches - Focusing on countries with large youth populations, collaborate with governments and their partners to test solutions proposed by youth and share learnings.
- Develop proof of concepts - Based on evidence generated by the DTH-Lab and others, create proof of concepts to show the effectiveness of value-based governance and other youth-led solutions and their potential for scale-up or replication in different contexts.
- Promote innovation - Inform and engage policymakers, technology companies and other strategic stakeholder groups to encourage uptake of proposed innovations and youth-centred approaches.

7. How is the DTH-Lab structured?

The core of the DTH-Lab consortium will initially comprise three regional hubs based in Africa (Nigeria), Asia (India) and Europe (Geneva). The DTH-Lab's secretariat is hosted at the University of Geneva and based at Campus Biotech. The two regional hubs are based at Ashoka University in India and PharmAccess in Nigeria.

Strategic and governance decisions will be made by a Steering Committee initially composed of former GHFutures2030 co-chairs Professor Ilona Kickbusch and Professor Anurag Agrawal; former commissioners Dr. Rohinton Medhora and Njide Ndili; the Lab's Executive Director Aferdita Bytyqi, a youth representative (appointed on a rotational basis) and a representative of the hosting institution.

The DTH-Lab will implement its activities through partnerships, building on the relationships and initiatives established by the Commission.

8. How will young people be involved in the DTH-Lab?

Youth will be key partners in all aspects of the DTH-Lab's work and will have a seat in the Lab's governance structure. Meaningful youth engagement and supporting them to become informed and enfranchised digital health citizens will be prioritised at every stage of the pathway to impact. The Lab will take concerted steps to capture and reflect the diverse views and experiences of young people in its activities and outputs and to champion their inclusion in external governance processes. This will include continued partnership with networks of youth and young health professionals.

9. Where will the DTH-Lab work?

The DTH-Lab will prioritise translating the Commission's recommendations into action in countries with large populations of young people which are predominantly situated in Africa and Asia. India and Nigeria will be regional hubs for the Lab and the main sites for piloting new tools and approaches.

The Commission's recommendations have global relevance. To differentiate between the situations in different parts of the world, and to capture the inputs of large cohorts of young people, selected activities will be conducted at global and regional levels and some will also be

carried   out   in   HICs   through   partners   to   ensure   comparisons.

10. How is the DTH-Lab funded?

The DTH-Lab is funded through a 3.5 year grant from [Fondation Botnar](). Co-funding and in-kind support is also being provided by our consortium partners Ashoka University, PharmAccess, and Bertlesmann Stiftung.

11. How can I collaborate with the DTH-Lab?

We welcome collaboration with existing and new partners. If you would like to talk to us about potential collaborations, please email the DTH-Lab's Executive Director [Aferdita.Bytyqi@unige.ch]().