

Advocating for Human Rights in the Digital Age:

Digital Health and Rights Project's Key Asks for the 77th World Health Assembly

Members of the Digital Health and Rights Project are attending the 77th World Health Assembly in Geneva between the 26th-30th May 2024.

The [Digital Health and Rights Project](#) (DHRP) brings together international social scientists, human rights lawyers, health advocates, and networks of people living with HIV, to conduct research and advocate for rights-based digital governance in Colombia, Ghana, Kenya, Vietnam, and globally. We use a transnational participatory action research approach, centering the voices and leadership of diverse young adults to define the future of human rights in the digital age.

Partners from STOPAIDS, Privacy International, Warwick University, KELIN, and Restless Development will be attending the World Health Assembly (WHA) between 25th-30th May.

Our advocacy priorities for digital health and human rights include:

1. For all stakeholders to recognise both the benefits and risks that digital technologies pose to human rights in particular the right to health and the right to privacy

Our [research](#) has demonstrated that health is a critical sector that is impacted, and will continue to be significantly transformed, by digital technologies and AI. Moreover, digital transformations are now widely recognised as determinants of health due to their profound direct and indirect impacts on all aspects of health and well-being. However, health is often omitted from key policy discussions on the design, implementation and regulation of technologies. At the WHA we want to see:

- A. Cross-sector discussions on the potential benefits and risks that digital technologies pose to the realisation of the right to health and how all stakeholders can work together to ensure human rights are upheld in the use of digital technologies and AI for health.
- B. Leadership from the WHO highlighting digital health as a key issue and setting norms for laws and policies for member states and third parties.

2. For all stakeholders to recognise the need for a rights-based approach to digital governance and commit to strengthening laws and policies to ensure rights are protected.

Currently, there are a limited number of laws and policies that address governance of digital technologies and AI for health. These technologies must be effectively and transparently governed and regulated in order to provide equitable healthcare for all, and human rights should be the foundation of any strategies, laws or policies on digital technologies. At the WHA we are asking:

- A. That the WHO Pandemic Instrument includes stronger commitments to protecting the right to privacy, especially as this relates to data sharing during health emergencies.
- B. That the Transform Health Coalition model law is strengthened to ensure individuals and their rights are at the centre of the law.

3. Increased recognition and support in the governance of digital technologies and AI for advancing the engagement and opportunities for youth and marginalised communities based in low- and middle-income countries.

Young people are the most digitally connected, making those online and engaged the most likely to benefit, but also the most vulnerable to the risks associated with giving up their data. It is essential that young people, marginalised communities and civil society are empowered to understand and have a say in policy-making that affects their digital rights. At the WHA we are calling for:

- A. Young people, marginalised communities and civil society to be represented at events, meaningfully involved in discussions and able to contribute to decision-making on digital governance at national, regional and global levels.
- B. The WHO to include a youth cluster in the Global Initiative on Digital Health governance structure.
- C. Support for the use of participatory action and community-engaged research to inform the evidence base on digital health.

DHRP Side Event 'Achieving Universal Health Coverage through an inclusive and rights-based digital transformation':



DHRP are hosting a side event at the WHA, with representatives from the WHO, UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights and civil society and community-led organisations.

More information and registration:

Title: Achieving UHC through an inclusive and rights-based digital transformation

Date: 29 May 2024

Time: 15:00 - 17:00 CEST, including networking apero.

Place: Campus BioTech, Geneva (Chem. des Mines 9, 1202 Genève).

Registration: To attend in-person RSVP to molly-pj@stopaids.org.uk. To attend online register [here](#).



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