

# THE NEW TECHNOLOGICAL ORDER

## THE RE-SHAPING OF HEALTH AND ITS DETERMINANTS

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*Director DTH LAB - University of Geneva*

*Global Community Health Annual Workshop*

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# DTH-LAB - WE DRIVE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATIONS FOR HEALTH THROUGH



## Policy

Co-creating innovative  
policies and practice

## Partnerships

Convening to shape the  
public and political agenda

## Research

Generating evidence  
to drive impact

## Youth

Strengthening the next  
generation of leaders today



# OTTAWA CHARTER FOR HEALTH PROMOTION

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- Health is created in the context of everyday life - where people live, love, work and play
- Where they google shop, travel, interact on social media etc.
- Increasing commercialization and digitalization of everyday life



# ZWISCHENZEIT

- *New virtual worlds, tools and AI are re-shaping how we live our everyday lives*



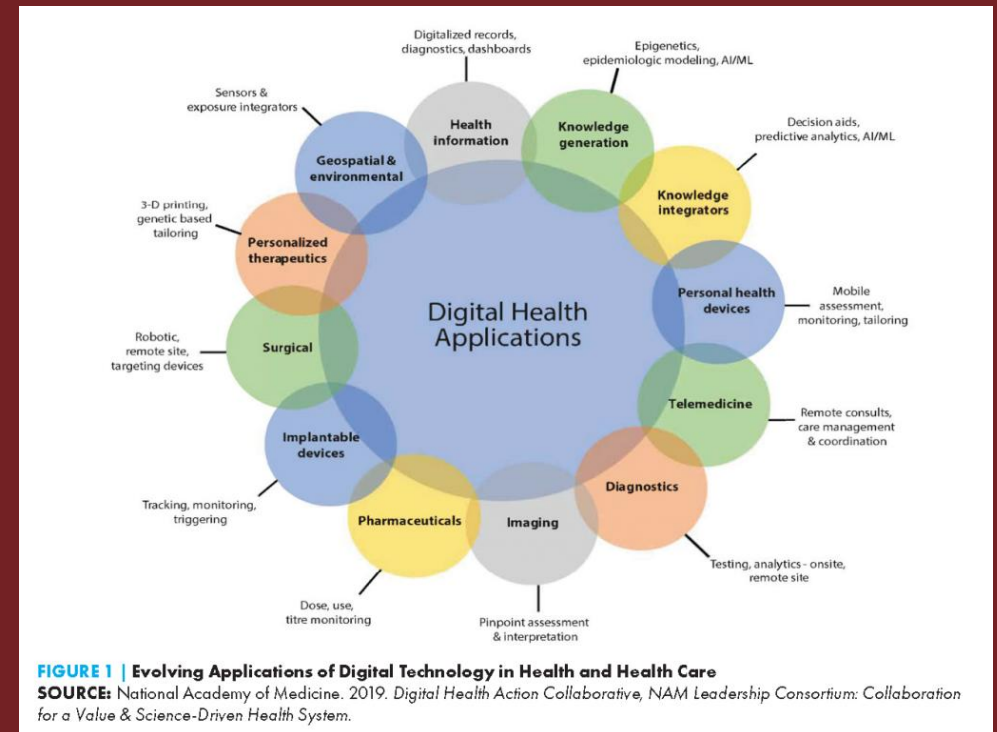
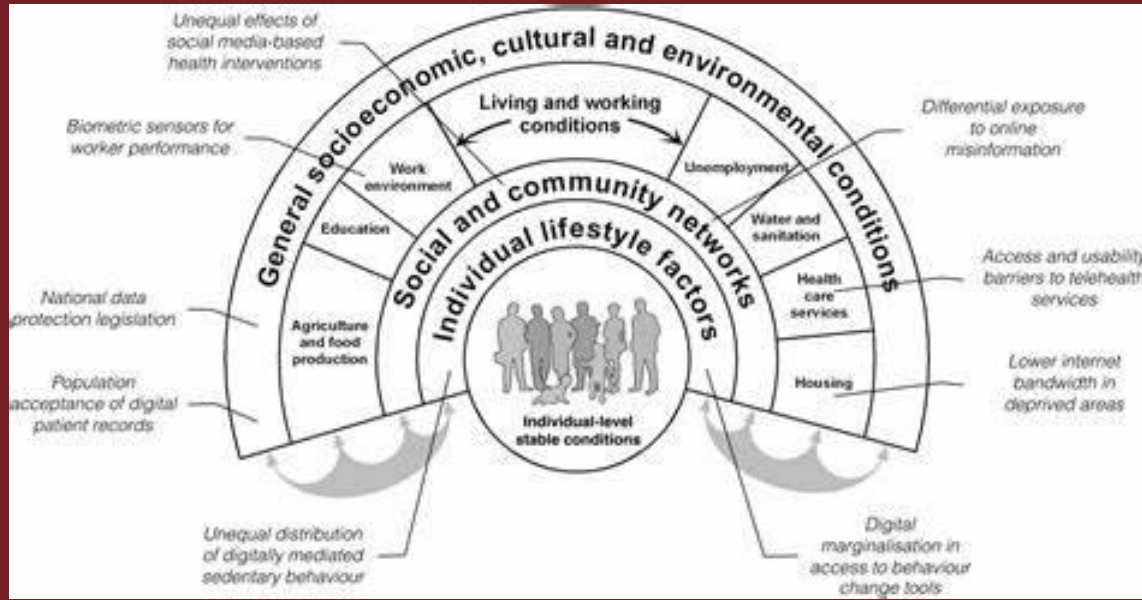


# WORLDBUILDING

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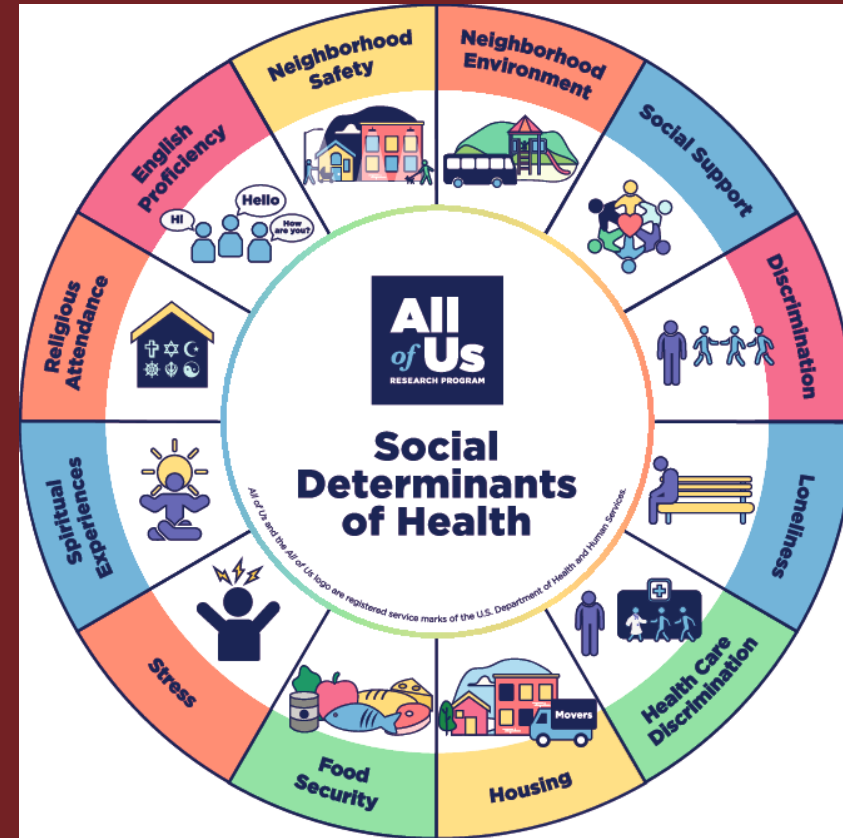
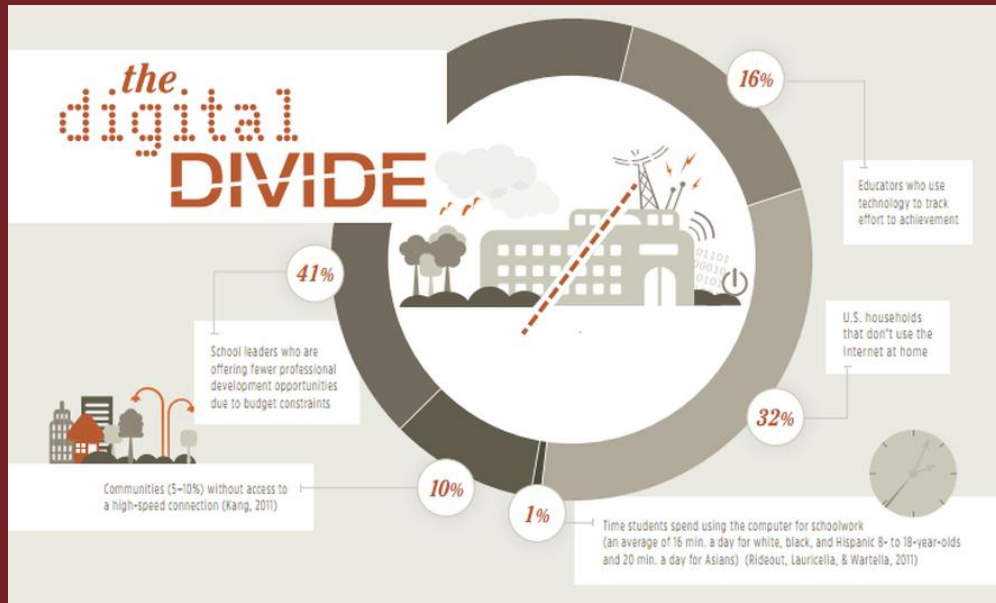
- The internet changes from an object to an environment, a medium in which we move, in turn reacting to our moves.

# THE DIGITAL RAINBOW



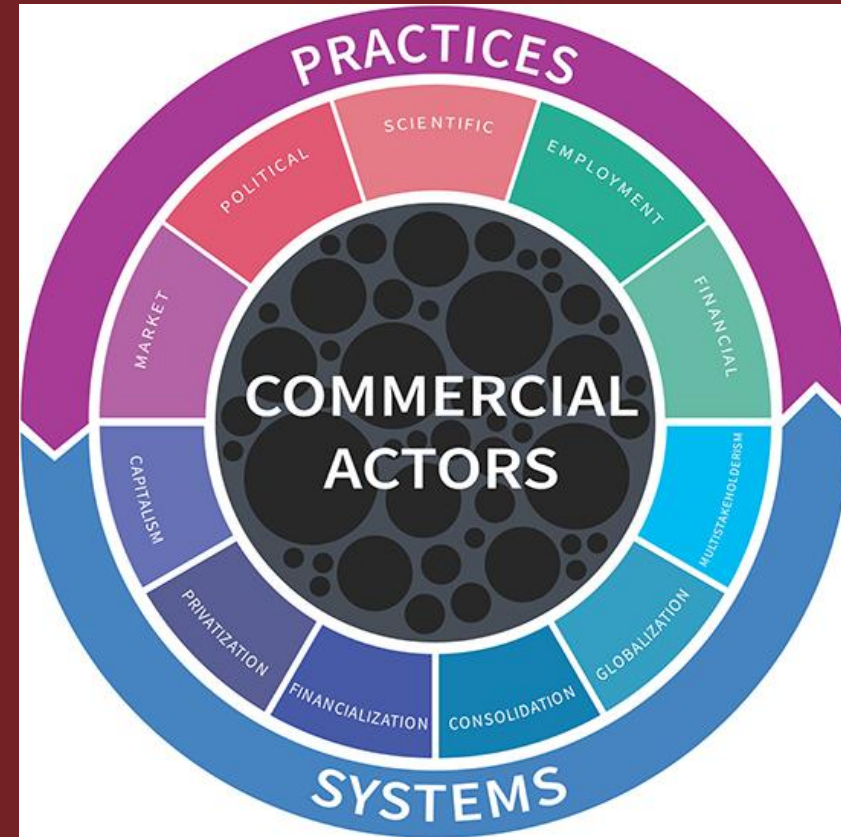
**FIGURE 1 | Evolving Applications of Digital Technology in Health and Health Care**  
**SOURCE:** National Academy of Medicine. 2019. *Digital Health Action Collaborative, NAM Leadership Consortium: Collaboration for a Value & Science-Driven Health System.*

# SOCIAL DETERMINANTS MEET THE DIGITAL DIVIDE



# COMMERCIAL DETERMINANTS THRIVE IN THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

- “the private sector activities that affect people's health, directly or indirectly, positively or negatively.”
- 1: unhealthy commodities that contribute to ill-health
- 2; business, market, and political practices that are harmful to health and used to sell these commodities and secure a favorable policy environment; and
- 3 global drivers of ill-health, such as market-driven economies and globalization, that have made it easier to use such harmful practices
- 4 data as a business model and source of profit.



# FOR FREE?



# DATA EXTRACTION

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- In the digital age, data has become a valuable resource that drives innovation, fuels economic growth, and shapes our modern society. However, the relentless pursuit of data has also given rise to a controversial phenomenon known as surveillance capitalism. This business model relies on the extraction, commodification, and monetization of personal data on an unprecedented scale, often without the explicit consent or full understanding of individuals.

## How surveillance capitalism works

- **Data collection.** Surplus user data is collected, such as locations, search history and habits.
- **Prediction products.** Prediction products based on that user data are created to anticipate what a person will do now, soon and later.
- **Behavioral markets.** Companies sell the new products in behavioral futures markets to businesses looking to use ads to target and influence their customers.

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# PRIVATE PROFIT VS PUBLIC VALUE

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- By tracking and analyzing our online activities, preferences, and behaviors, these companies can create detailed profiles that reveal our innermost thoughts, desires, and vulnerabilities. This treasure trove of personal data is then packaged and sold to advertisers, marketers, and other third parties, enabling them to target us with highly personalized and persuasive content.



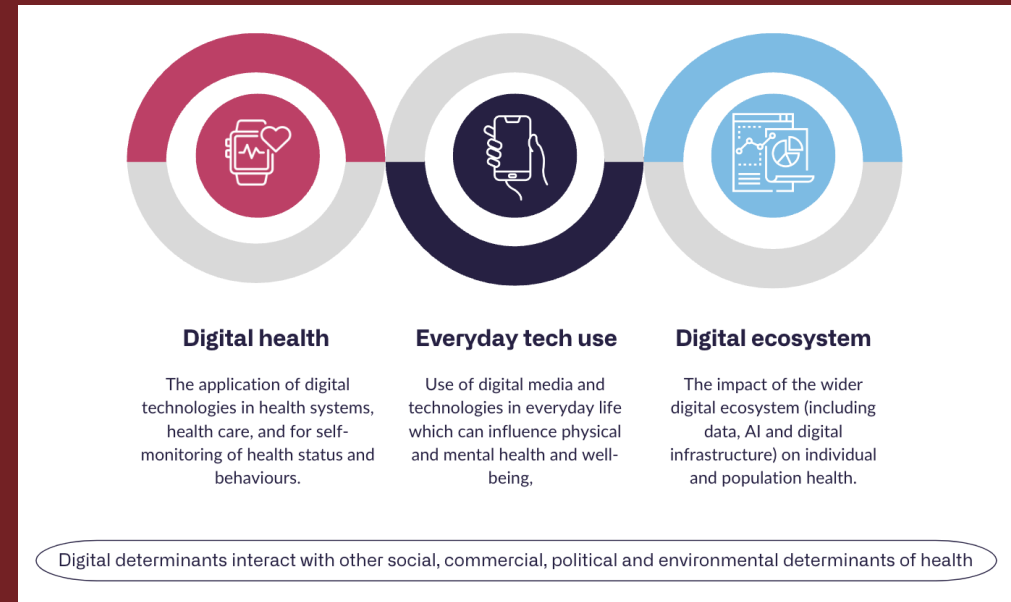


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ONE OF THE CROSS-CUTTING PRINCIPLES FOR ALL OF THESE RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IS THAT YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD PLAY AN ACTIVE AND MEANINGFUL ROLE IN CO-CREATING A HEALTHY DIGITAL WORLD

# DIGITAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH:

The characteristics, features, uses, and governance of digital technologies and digital ecosystems (platforms and data systems) that influence health-related behaviours, health outcomes, and healthcare delivery



# HOW DOES THE INTERSECTION WORK?

- **Business model**: Profit maximizing at the cost of public health
- **Marketing and Manipulation** – data driven advertising
- **Platformization** – digital platforms as channels for harmful products
- **Enable health misinformation**

Monitoring and restricting digital marketing of unhealthy products to children and adolescents : CLICK tool

Dr. Kremlin Wickramasinghe *MBBS MSc DPhil*  
WHO European Office for Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases



# SOCIAL COMMERCE

Social commerce is defined as the marketing and selling of products or services through social media platforms.

It encompasses the entire shopping experience, from discovery to purchase, occurring within social media rather than on a separate website. It leverages established social media platforms to facilitate direct sales and enhance customer engagement.



# ZWISCHENZEIT

- **Weak regulation** of digital and commercial synergies
- **Lack of norms** for cross border digital commerce
- **Very low accountability** for corporate harms
- **New forms** of marketing and social commerce



# PUBLIC HEALTH - DIGITAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



- **Unequal access** to quality digital health solutions
- Growing evidence of **digital harms** to brain development, physical health, mental health and well-being
- **Commercial interests** of digital platforms are at odds with public health
- AI and other digital innovations are **outpacing policy responses**



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MINISTRIES OF HEALTH & PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS

Make young people's digital well-being a **policy priority**

Apply proven, intersectoral **public health strategies** to improve digital well-being

Develop clear **guidance** on digital well-being and healthy technology use

Hold industry and commercial interests **to account**

Support and initiate future **laws and regulation** to make digital environments healthy places for young people

Bolster the capacity of the **health workforce** to promote healthy technology use

Support families and communities to use and advocate for **alternatives** to screen-based parenting, play and entertainment

Increase **research** into the impacts of social media on young people's mental health and well-being

## Guiding principles:

Precautionary principle / Co-creation with young people & families

# WHERE WE ARE AT: CONSOLIDATION

- Tech companies are central to private, social, economic and civic life.
- The world is dependent on connectivity.
- Their products and services are becoming critical infrastructures
- They control data – an essential commercial and geopolitical asset
- In consequence they are moving from the economic into the (geo) political realm.



# TECHNOPOLAR WORLD

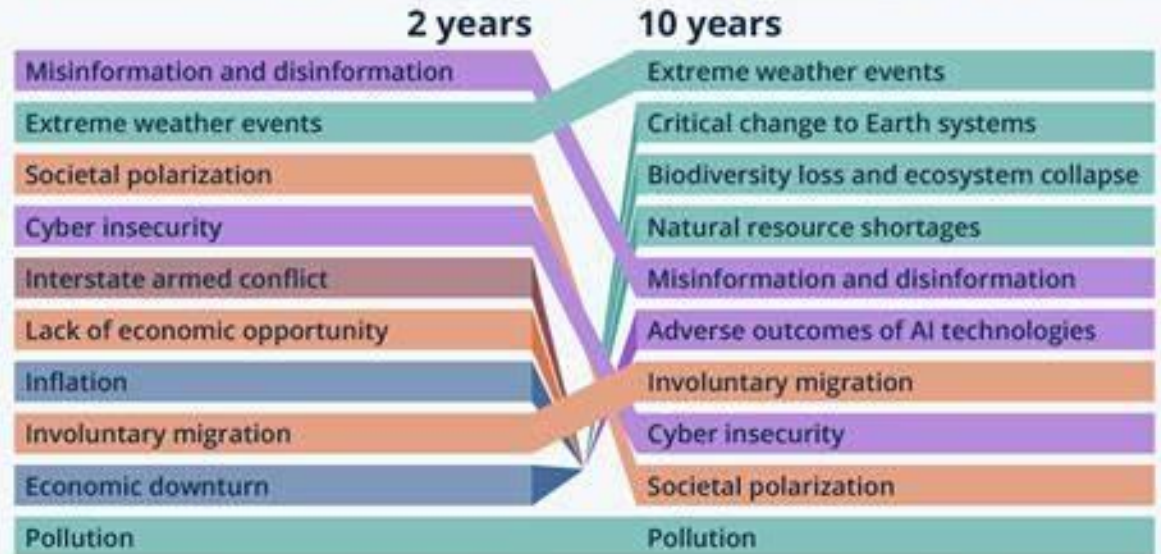


## The Largest Risks Faced by the World



Experts' view on the most severe global risks over the next 2 and 10 years\*

Environmental Geopolitical Societal Technological Economic



\* Based on risk assessments by 1,490 experts across academia, business, government, the international community and civil society collected Sep. - Oct. 2023.  
 Source: World Economic Forum



# YOUTH AUTHORED STATEMENT



Digital citizenship for health:  
Overcoming challenges for youth  
Youth authored statement

