



# Report on the ADHN Plenary Session at the Africa HealthTech Summit 2024

## Event Details

- **Date:** 31st October 2024
- **Location:** Room MH1/MH2
- **Session:** "Connecting Africa's Digital Health Communities of Practice"

## Overview

The Africa Digital Health Networks (ADHN) is a pan-African initiative aimed at accelerating the digital transformation of health systems across the continent. The network serves as a platform for collaboration among a diverse group of stakeholders—including governments, private sector entities, academia, civil society, and international partners—who are committed to leveraging digital technologies to enhance health outcomes in Africa.

The Africa HealthTech Summit, a premier event that explores the role of technology in shaping Africa's health landscape, presents an ideal opportunity for the ADHN to engage with its members and other key stakeholders. The plenary session will be a critical moment to reflect on the network's progress, share insights from various dockets, and discuss the way forward.

**Participants:** ADHN members, digital health stakeholders, partners, government representatives, academia, private sector, and civil society.

## SESSION OBJECTIVES

- To Present the current status of the ADHN, with a focus on the outcomes of the co- creation process.
- To Provide an update on the progress made across the various dockets within the ADHN.
- To Facilitate an interactive discussion on the challenges, opportunities, and strategic direction for the network.
- To Strengthen collaboration among ADHN members and broader stakeholders.

**The opening remarks were made by Wifred Nyagi** who set a warm and collaborative tone by emphasising the theme “You Will Never Walk Alone,” stressing the importance of collective action in advancing digital health. Reflecting on the journey from last year’s summit, he highlighted the growth of the ADHN and how this network empowers members to shape



Africa’s digital health landscape together. This was followed by a **Welcome Address by Jean Philbert Nsangimana, Chief Digital Advisor, Africa CDC and Interim Chairperson, ADHN.** He shared ADHN’s journey, celebrating its growth from its inception in 2022 to its present-day reach, with over 200 organisational members spanning government, health, private sectors, academia, and youth leaders. He acknowledged ADHN’s role in uniting stakeholders across Africa and facilitating resource mobilisation. Jean Philbert also announced ADHN’s transition towards formalising as a nonprofit entity and invited all members to actively contribute to this journey.

### Panel Discussion with Docket Leaders

The panel featured key representatives from various sectors, each sharing their experiences, progress updates and vision for ADHN:

**-Brian O’Connor (Chair, ECHAlliance):** He underscored the importance of global engagement and collaboration, advocating for building networks across continents to showcase Africa’s digital health achievements on a global stage. He also shared the opportunities ADHN leveraged to engage at Global platforms.

**-Fatou Fall (Regional Director, PATH):** Highlighted the role of development agencies in Connecting and Supporting Cross-Sector Stakeholders ,Enabling Policy &

standards Harmonization, Knowledge Sharing and Championing Grassroots initiatives for cultural relevance.

**-Lola Aderemi (Co-founder , Pharmarun and Youth Representative):** Spoke passionately about amplifying youth voices in digital health, tracing the origin of youth involvement in ADHN from the AHTS 2023 Ministerial Breakfast to the 2023 Africa CDC YPC where the conversation to establish a youth network. The docket has made progress in carrying out an online consultation and a 2 days co-creation workshop for the Youth in Digital Health Network. She further shared a significant milestone of the network launch at the AHTS 2024 and called for more youth engagement in shaping the continent's digital health future.

**-Dr. Francis Ohanyido (DG ,WAPHI):** Emphasized the need for data-driven research and capacity-building among healthcare academia in Africa, and the importance of bringing together academic institutions to contribute to ADHN's objectives.

**Dr. Amit Thakker (Executive Chairman, AHB):** Shared insights on the critical role of the private sector in advancing digital health, advocating for sustainable investment, job creation, and innovative partnerships across Africa and the role ADHN is playing in bridging the gap.





### Key Highlight from Open Forum

The Q/A session addressed essential topics, including the need for:

- Cross-border collaboration among governments and policy-sharing to build a united digital health ecosystem.
- Strengthening digital health capacity across Africa
- Engaging all stakeholders

through open collaboration and joint initiatives to drive digital health forward.

### Next Steps and Future Goals

- **Strengthening Collaboration:** Encouragement for all communities of practice to unite under ADHN.
- **Member Engagement:** Invitation for increased participation through social media and ongoing events.
- **Formal Establishment and operationalizing ADHN**

### Concluding Remarks

**Jean Philbert** concluded the session by appreciating the dedication of all members, delegates, and partners, including GIZ African Union and Smart Africa. He reiterated ADHN's commitment to creating a strong network that benefits all member states and highlighted the network's role in supporting cross-continental digital health collaboration.

