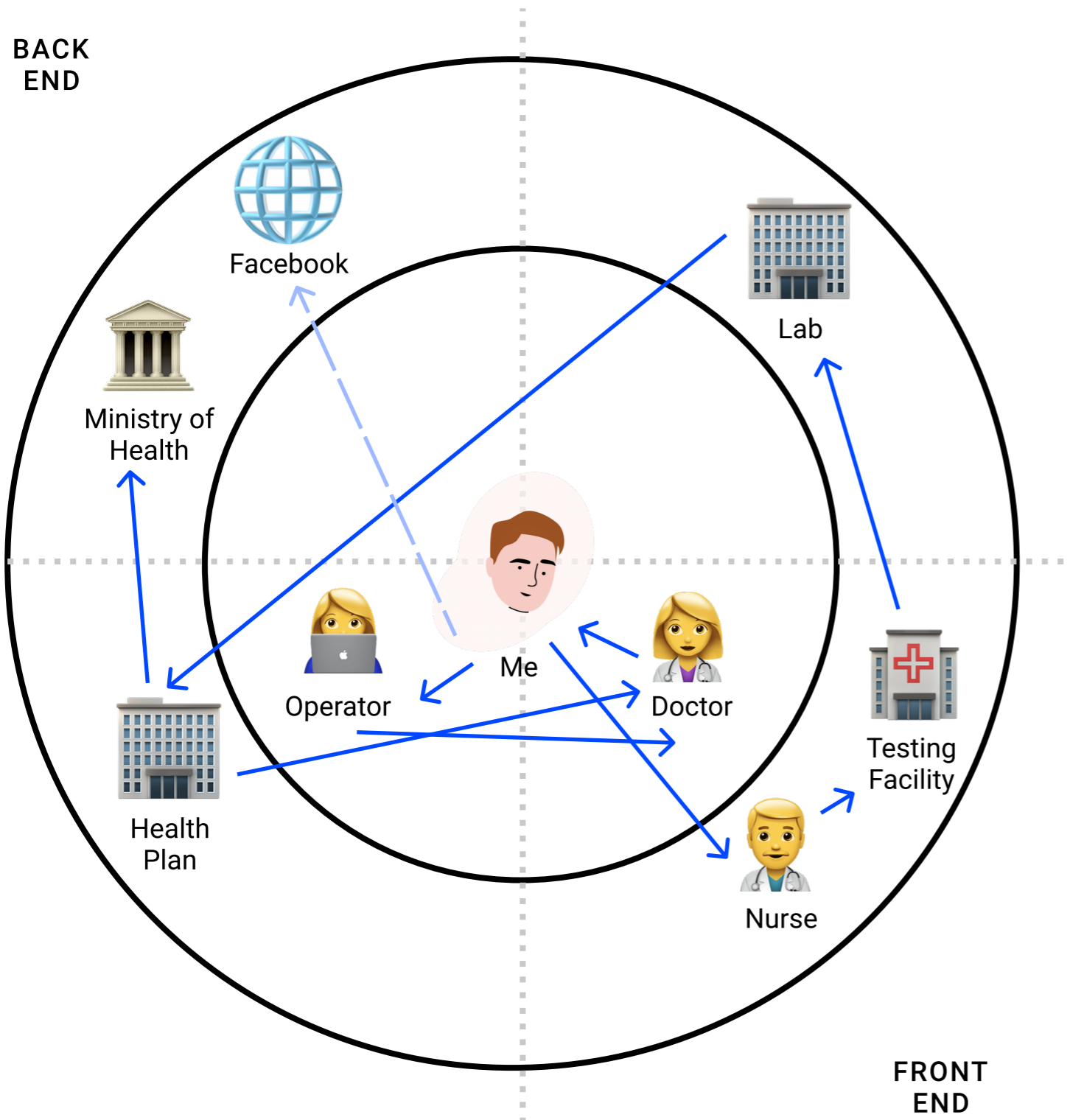


Data ecosystem of a COVID test

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About this map

Last week, after showing some symptoms, I decided to get tested for COVID. This implied getting in touch with my health plan provider, who then put me in touch through WhatsApp with a doctor, who then set me up with an appointment to get a PCR test at a testing center.

In this graphic I map out the data flows that were involved in the process. In the upper part are the “invisible” actors, the ones in the back end, and in the lower part are the “visible ones”, the ones in the front end. The horizontal separation is arbitrary, separated between socioeconomic relations (left) and practical health concerns (right).

Critical questions

Mapping the data flows was useful to understand the different stakeholders involved in an activity that has become commonplace during the pandemic. Based on this activity, some critical questions appeared.

What decisions could I make through the process? During the process, I could not choose the infrastructure through which I could communicate. WhatsApp was the only and default choice.

Under which conditions was my information shared throughout stakeholders? Although I was never informed, I understand my information was shared with the government, although I don't know whether my information was anonymized, for example.

What real power did I have over my information? I was not offered the possibility to manage my data, and it was all handled by third parties.