



The **World Health Organization (WHO)**, a specialized agency of the United Nations, was established on **April 7, 1948**. Its primary mission is to promote global health and well-being, ensuring that all people can attain the highest level of health possible. With a mandate to direct international health work and monitor trends, the WHO focuses on **health systems strengthening, disease prevention, and emergency preparedness**. The organization's work is guided by the principles of the **right to health** and the **universal health coverage (UHC)** framework.

The WHO's current global health priorities include combating **infectious diseases** such as COVID-19, **antimicrobial resistance (AMR)**, **mental health**, **non-communicable diseases (NCDs)**, and **universal health coverage**. It operates in collaboration with other UN bodies, national governments, and health experts worldwide.

WHO plays a crucial role in shaping health policies, providing technical assistance, conducting research, and creating frameworks for countries to follow in order to achieve better health outcomes. Its main responsibilities are:

- **Setting health standards:** WHO creates global health standards and guidelines on issues such as sanitation, hygiene, vaccination schedules, and health care services.
- **Monitoring health trends:** The WHO tracks health statistics globally and publishes critical reports such as the **World Health Report** and the **Global Health Observatory**.
- **Providing emergency response:** In times of health crises like the **Ebola outbreak** or **COVID-19**, WHO coordinates international efforts and provides expertise, funding, and logistical support.
- **Technical assistance and capacity building:** WHO assists governments in improving their health systems through technical support, training, and guidance on public health policy.

Focus issue

Global Health Inequalities

Health disparities between high-income and low-income countries persist, with populations in poorer regions facing higher rates of **maternal mortality, child mortality, malnutrition, and lack of access to essential medicines**. These inequalities are further exacerbated by **conflict, displacement, and climate change**. Achieving **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)** remains a primary objective of WHO, ensuring that everyone, everywhere, can access the health services they need without facing financial hardship.

Your role

As delegates representing member states of the WHO, your role is to address these key issues from your country's perspective. You will be expected to:

- Discuss strategies to **reduce health inequalities** and ensure access to quality health services for all.
- Propose solutions to improve **pandemic preparedness** and strengthen **global health systems**.
- Develop plans for addressing the growing burden of **non-communicable diseases** and **mental health** concerns.
- Advocate for the integration of **climate change** and health policy.
- Foster international **cooperation** and promote **research and development** in global health.

Health Inequalities guiding questions:

1. **How can the World Health Organization (WHO) address the widening health disparities between high-income and low-income countries?**
 - What policies or initiatives can be implemented to reduce these disparities, especially in terms of access to healthcare and essential medicines?
2. **What role do social determinants of health (such as education, income, and living conditions) play in creating health inequalities, and how can countries work together to address them?**
 - How can WHO collaborate with other UN agencies to tackle social determinants more effectively?
3. **How can we ensure that Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is achievable for all countries, especially those with limited financial resources or in conflict zones?**
 - What financing mechanisms or international aid systems can be created to support UHC in low-income countries?
4. **What are the most pressing challenges in providing equitable access to vaccines, especially in the face of global health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic?**
 - How can WHO ensure that vaccine distribution is equitable and that vulnerable populations are prioritized?
5. **In what ways can health systems in low-income countries be strengthened to better handle both infectious diseases and the increasing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs)?**

- What specific measures can WHO and international stakeholders take to improve healthcare infrastructure in these regions?
- 6. **What is the role of global health financing institutions (such as the Global Fund or Gavi) in addressing health inequalities, and how can they be made more accessible to lower-income countries?**
 - How can these institutions be made more effective in ensuring equitable health financing for marginalized populations?
- 7. **How can the impact of climate change on health inequalities be mitigated, particularly for communities already vulnerable to diseases like malaria, cholera, and malnutrition?**
 - What steps can WHO take to integrate health considerations into climate change adaptation strategies?

WHO'S PAST RESOLUTIONS

- **COVID-19 Response:** WHO played a central role in coordinating the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic. From providing scientific guidance to ensuring equitable distribution of vaccines, the organization worked to mitigate the health impact of the pandemic, despite facing criticisms about its early responses.
- **Global Vaccine Initiatives:** WHO is a key player in initiatives like **Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance**, which aims to provide vaccines to children in low-income countries, and **COVAX**, which seeks to ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines worldwide.
- **The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC):** The WHO's global treaty on tobacco control has been instrumental in reducing tobacco consumption through measures such as advertising restrictions, public smoking bans, and health warnings on packaging.