

**King's Model United Nations
World Health Organization (WHO)**



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Welcome Letter

Dear King'sMUN 2025 delegates,

As this year's Co-Secretary Generals of King'sMUN, we are truly honoured to welcome you to our 11th annual conference. The Secretariat has been working hard throughout this school year to deliver you an incredible, in-person conference with various unique committees, experienced chairs, and a successful day of debate.

Model United Nations, a reenactment of the function of the United Nations, is designed for students to come together to debate, discuss, and develop creative resolutions to various pressing issues that plague our current world. In most committees, students take on the positions of multiple countries, characters, or political figures to create solutions for real and fictional issues and crises. We provide distinctive committees that delve into historical events, future scenarios, and fictional topics.

In our personal experience with MUN, we have developed many valuable skills that we will take with us throughout our lives, such as confidence in public speaking, leadership, and creative problem-solving. Furthermore, MUN promotes lifelong connections, as we meet delegates who share similar passions in committee sessions. We genuinely believe that your participation in MUN will guide you throughout your high school journey and beyond.

At King'sMUN, we provide a variety of committees to ensure that we have something of interest for everyone. From very current pressing issues (i.e. UNSC and the ICJ) and issues in sports (i.e. English Premier League and International Olympic Committee) to fictional committees, yet applicable issues (i.e. Pokémon) and issues set in our very own communities (i.e. Government of Ontario). We strive to ensure that there is appeal for a variety of delegates. Whether you have no experience or have attended many conferences, there is a place at King'sMUN for you!

Once again, we are thrilled to welcome all delegates, new or returning, back to King'sMUN. We hope you will engage in fruitful debate and have a fantastic time at King'sMUN 2025.

Sincerely,

Aryan Suri and Luciana Ilic

Co-Secretary Generals

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History of the World Health Organization (WHO)

After World War II and the fall of the League of Nations, countries were in turmoil and in search of a way to accomplish lasting peace. For two months, fifty-one countries gathered in San Francisco. During this meeting, Brazil and China suggested that an international health organization be formed, and in April of 1945, the basis for the United Nations began. Four months after the completion of the meetings in San Francisco, on October 24th 1945, the United Nations was officially formed. The role of the United Nations is *to maintain international laws, security, and peace. It serves to protect human rights and at the same time set sustainable development goals to improve our futures and the futures of generations to come* (“History of the United Nations | United Nations”). The United Nations drew up plans and a proposal for an International Health Program to address global health concerns. Fifty-one countries signed the proposal and the program was approved in New York on July 22, 1946 (“History of WHO - History of WHO”). Although this groundbreaking agreement represented the first step towards a global health watchdog, WHO would not come into existence officially until 1948.

In 1947, the World Health Organization established the first disease-tracking system globally. WHO created the first essential medicines list in 1977, based on their safety, accuracy, and value. This list was adopted in many countries which strived to make these medications accessible everywhere (“Public health milestones through the years”). The World Health organization is managed and maintained by all members of the United Nations.

History of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

UNICEF or United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund is a United Nations organization founded on December 11, 1946, the same year the WHO was signed. UNICEF is a children's fund that works in the toughest parts of the world in order to aid the most disadvantaged children and teens. It works to protect the rights of all children no matter where in the world they are. UNICEF is one of the largest providers of vaccines, almost equalling the efforts of the WHO. They also provide health, nutrition, sanitation, clean water, and education to children in need (“UNICEF Questions”).

Purpose

WHO was initially created to promote health, serve the vulnerable, and overall keep the world safe from health hazards. The World Health Organization works to promote mental and physical health, improve access to healthcare essentials, and support participation in national health policies. The World Health Organization's goal is to provide universal healthcare to people who otherwise would have no access to it, and to improve their lives (“What we do - What we do”). It works to eradicate widespread diseases, such as through polio vaccine (1952) and smallpox eradication (1980). WHO was formed as a way to provide safety and implement universal health care laws and policies to as many people as possible (“Public health milestones through the years”). WHO has made a considerable impact on eradicating and reducing the spread of diseases throughout the world, especially in less wealthy nations. An example of that impact can be seen in the effects vaccines had on controlling cases of polio as reflected in the graphs below.

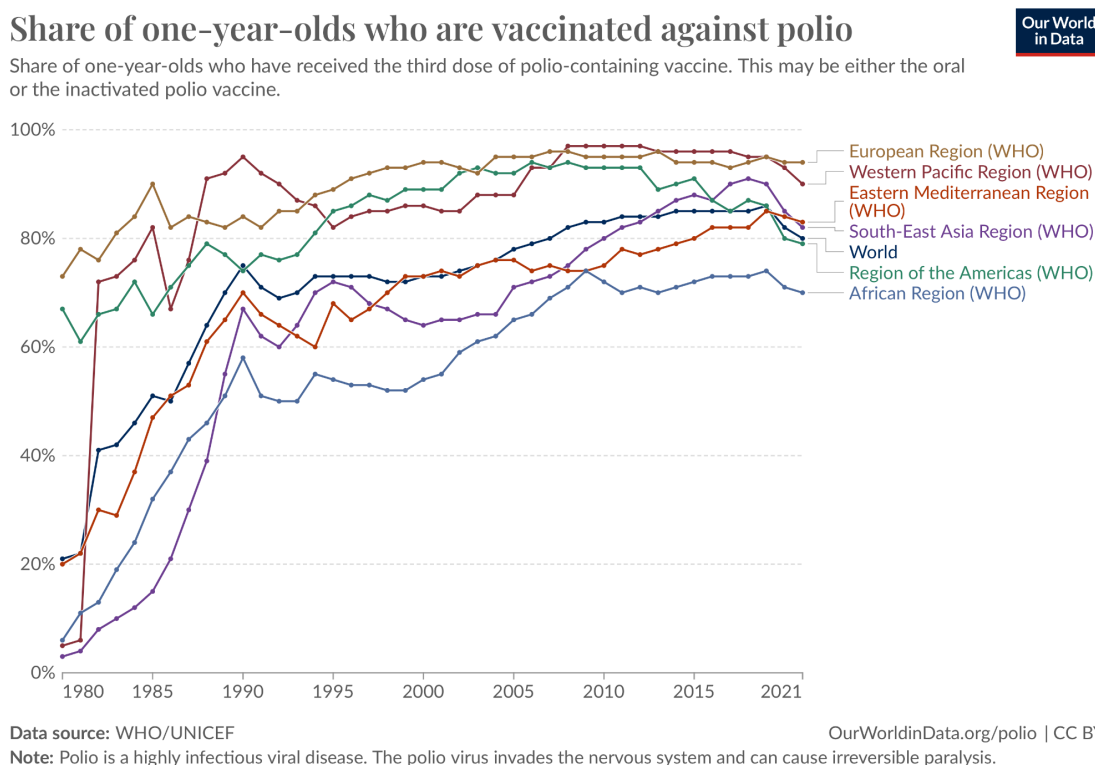
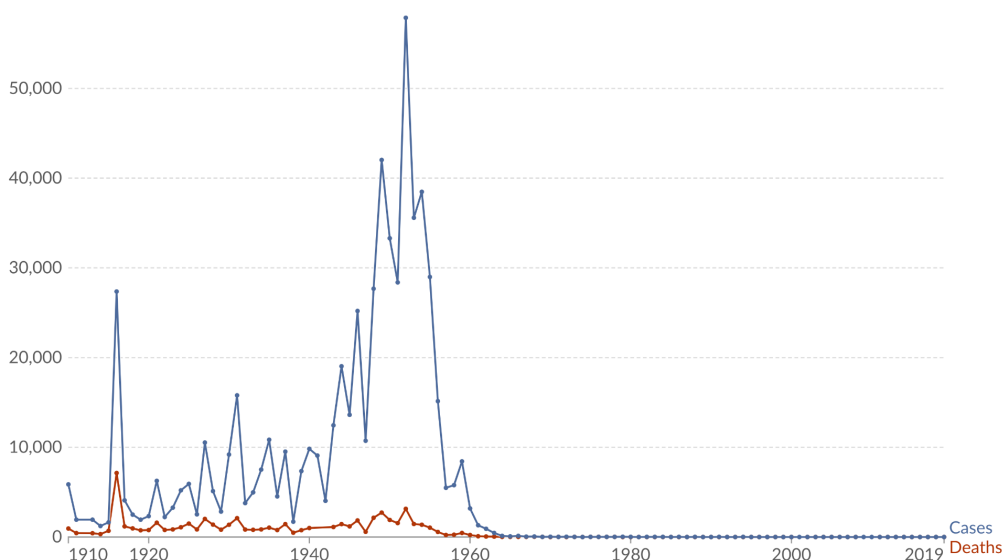


Figure 1: One Year Olds Vaccinated Against Polio Over Time

Source: <https://ourworldindata.org/polio>

Reported paralytic polio cases and deaths, United States, 1910 to 2019

The reported figures include both wild-¹ and vaccine-derived poliovirus² infections that occurred indigenously and as imported cases.



Data source: Our World In Data based on US Public Health Service; US Center for Disease Control; and WHO
OurWorldinData.org/polio | CC BY

Figure 2: Reported Paralytic Polio Cases and Deaths in the USA (1910-2019)

Source: <https://ourworldindata.org/polio>

Topic 1: Strengthening Global Cooperation for the Prevention and Control of Zoonotic Disease Outbreaks

Background:

Zoonotic diseases, which are transmitted from animals to humans, represent one of the greatest threats to global health today. Outbreaks such as COVID-19, Ebola, and avian influenza have underscored the devastating impact these diseases can have on human lives, economies, and healthcare systems. With global trade and travel accelerating the spread of infectious diseases, it has become clear that no country is immune to these threats.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has long been at the forefront of tackling zoonotic diseases through global surveillance networks, early warning systems, and coordinated vaccination programs. Frameworks like the International Health Regulations (IHR) and the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (PIP) Framework aim to strengthen preparedness and response strategies. However, challenges persist. Developing nations often lack the infrastructure for robust disease detection and response, leaving them disproportionately vulnerable. Additionally,

misinformation, vaccine inequities, and geopolitical tensions have further hindered global responses.

Past efforts have demonstrated the power of international cooperation, such as the WHO-led global campaign to eradicate smallpox and recent efforts to combat Ebola in West Africa. Yet, with over 60% of emerging infectious diseases being zoonotic, it is evident that more must be done to address this ongoing challenge.

Specific Focus Areas:

- Enhancing surveillance and early detection systems: Expanding the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN) to better monitor potential zoonotic disease hotspots.
- Vaccine equity: Ensuring low- and middle-income countries receive timely access to vaccines through mechanisms like COVAX.
- Strengthening One Health approaches: Promoting interdisciplinary collaboration between human health, animal health, and environmental sectors to identify and mitigate risks.
- Combating misinformation: Addressing disinformation campaigns that undermine public health responses, particularly during vaccination rollouts.

Historical Context: The WHO has a long history of addressing zoonotic diseases. For example, in the 2003 SARS outbreak, rapid information-sharing and international travel advisories were key to controlling its spread. The Ebola outbreak in 2014 demonstrated the importance of quick funding mechanisms and the deployment of medical teams to affected areas. These historical lessons must inform future strategies.

Topic 2: Delivering Healthcare in Conflict Zones and Disaster-Stricken Regions

Background:

Conflict zones and disaster-prone areas present unique and pressing challenges for healthcare delivery. War-torn regions like Syria and Yemen, or areas devastated by natural disasters like the 2010 Haiti earthquake, have seen healthcare systems collapse under the strain of crises.

Vulnerable populations, including refugees, internally displaced persons, and those living in marginalized communities, are often left without access to basic medical care, clean water, or sanitation. These crises exacerbate existing health disparities and leave millions at risk of preventable illnesses and death.

The World Health Organization plays a critical role in addressing these challenges. Through initiatives such as the Health Cluster system, WHO coordinates international responses, bringing together governments, NGOs, and private sector partners to deliver life-saving aid. However, funding shortfalls, logistical barriers, and security concerns often limit the effectiveness of these efforts. Moreover, prolonged conflicts can lead to the erosion of healthcare infrastructure, leaving communities without long-term access to essential services.

Specific Focus Areas:

- Neutrality and access: Ensuring healthcare providers can operate safely in conflict zones without becoming targets of violence.
- Innovations in healthcare delivery: Utilizing telemedicine, drone technology, and portable clinics to reach remote or inaccessible regions.
- Mental health support: Addressing the psychological toll of crises on affected populations, particularly children and survivors of trauma.
- Rapid response funding: Establishing dedicated funds to ensure timely and flexible financing for emergency healthcare.
- Partnerships and coordination: Enhancing collaboration between WHO, NGOs, and local governments to streamline aid delivery and avoid duplication of efforts.

Historical Context: The Syrian Civil War has illustrated both the challenges and successes of healthcare delivery in conflict zones. WHO-supported mobile clinics have provided essential services to displaced populations, while vaccination campaigns have helped prevent the outbreak of diseases like polio. Similarly, during Cyclone Idai in Mozambique, WHO's rapid response teams collaborated with local health workers to contain a cholera outbreak and distribute clean water supplies. These examples highlight the need for adaptable, context-specific strategies in addressing health crises.

Connections To Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

The World Health Organization is a clear representation of sustainable development goals in action. The SDGs are a list of 17 goals set by the United Nations to help improve our

world and the lives of people. Some examples include SDG 3, 16, and 6, all of which are vital to maintaining WHO and its programs' goals of making a difference.

SDG 3 or “Good Health and Well-Being” in particular is extremely relevant to the World Health Organization. It aims to eradicate substance abuse and infectious disease by supporting research and development. SDG 3 also aims to facilitate universal health coverage and increase health financing, which mirror the goals of the World Health Organization. SDG target 3.8 is to “Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all”. It supports the direct goals of the World Health Organization. Namely, ensuring people of all communities all over the world can secure the care they need (“Goal 3 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs”). The impact of SDG 3 and WHO on health care coverage between years 2000 and 2021 are shown below.



Coverage of essential health services, 2000

Coverage of essential health services is measured as an index on a scale of 0 to 100 (where higher is better). This index is based on risk-standardized death rates – which give a measure of healthcare access and quality – and whether common interventions are carried out.

Our World
in Data

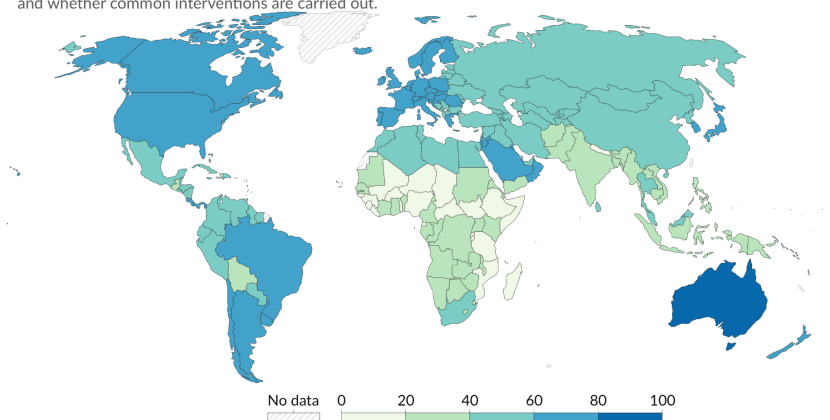


Figure 4: Coverage of essential Health Services (2000)

Source: <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/healthcare-access-quality-un>

Coverage of essential health services, 2021

Our World
in Data

Coverage of essential health services is measured as an index on a scale of 0 to 100 (where higher is better). This index is based on risk-standardized death rates – which give a measure of healthcare access and quality – and whether common interventions are carried out.

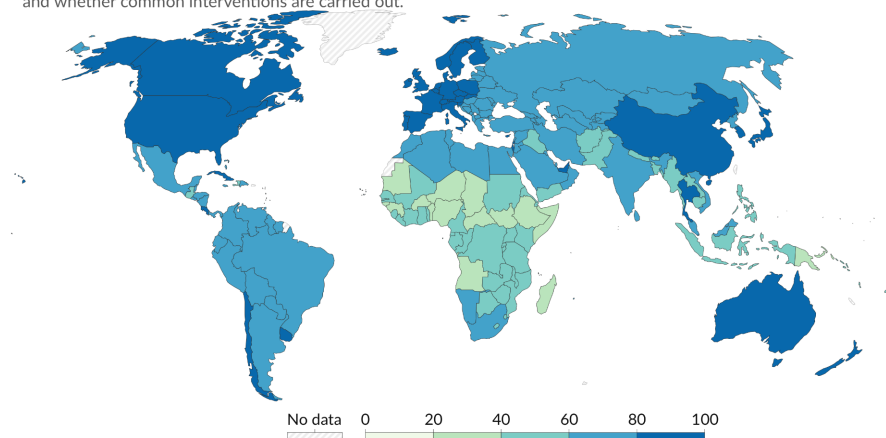


Figure 5: Coverage of essential Health Services (2021)

Source: <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/healthcare-access-quality-un>



SDG 16, or “Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions”, is a direct reflection of everything the United Nations and the Sustainable Development Goals strive for. SDG 16 is devoted to getting equal access to all people no matter their identity, location, and social status. Providing equal access to healthcare all over the world is a vital part of the World Health Organizations mandate. Making sure everyone can access proper care and essential medications on the universal list of essential medicines is key to this goal (“Goal 16 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs”).

SDG 6, or “Clean Water and Sanitation”, brings awareness to the WHO’s connections to clean water and human health. Clean Water and Sanitation target number 6.2 states, “By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations”. SDG Target 6.3 states, “By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally”. SDG targets 6.2 and 6.3 promise safe and hygienic water sources, which is important to the removal of waterborne diseases. Improving sanitation will ensure that all peoples have access to safe drinking water and are able to avoid the spread of diseases such as polio and typhoid. The World Health



Organization is constantly aiming to eliminate harmful and deadly diseases (“Goal 6 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs”). Sustainable development goals are vital to the protection of our world and the people in it. As no goals stand by themselves, all SDGs are intertwined with each other in some way.

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