



# WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

## PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY AMIDST SHIFTING GLOBAL TRENDS

Proactively Combating 21st Century Epidemics

Formulating Sustainable Solutions in Addressing the Global Shortage of Clean Water

# PROACTIVELY COMBATING 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY EPIDEMICS

## INTRODUCTION

The globalized world paved the way for interdependence, mobility, and the innovation of technology; however, it has also caused the rapid spread of infectious diseases or epidemics. Causal factors such as migration, poverty, and scarcity of resources have contributed to the widespread of such epidemics. Moreover, as the world progresses, more diseases are becoming known at an unprecedented rate. Evidently present are some of the greatest epidemics in our world today, whether vector-borne, bacterial, air-borne, water-borne, regardless of classification and source, remains detrimental to human life. Furthermore, billions of people from both developed and developing states are affected by the issue of epidemics.

The *World Health Organization* (WHO) identified more than 1,100 epidemic events worldwide with 40 diseases that remain to be unknown that have emerged a generation ago. Such diseases can be classified as epidemic-prone diseases, foodborne diseases, and accidental and deliberate disease outbreaks.

Epidemic prone diseases are easily spread in communities, some of which are Cholera, Diphtheria, Haemophilus Influenzae type B, Plague, Yellow fever, and the like. Foodborne diseases can be caused by food spoilage of contaminated food caused by pathogenic bacteria, viruses, or parasites that infect food. Disease outbreaks are the occurrence of a disease in excessive amounts in a specific community, geographical area, or season.

Thus, the international community and the World Health Organization must create new frameworks to have a guiding plan for the Member States to adhere to. Considering the existence of a framework conceived in the 1990s, there must be an updated version fit for the issues of the present. Seeing there are constant developments in different aspects, the guidelines that the WHO is following must be applicable and adaptable in our time. Enhancing the global framework to cope with existing trends and factors is an imperative. The international community and the World Health Organization must be involved and proactive in trying to combat any new epidemics that may arise in the 21st century. The causes of said epidemics

must be taken into consideration to prevent the demise of populations from all Member States.

## INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS

Epidemics are mostly thriving in developing states, wherein the ability to respond and detect is lacking or nonexistent. Thus, leaving them susceptible to spreading the disease within the country and across borders. Moreover, new diseases may come from a "breach in the species barrier between humans and animals, permitting microbes that infect animals to infect humans as well, causing unexpected outbreaks." Hence, international actions through cooperation and collaboration are essential to enhance current WHO frameworks and prevent the further spread of said diseases in the 21st century.

The political, economic, and social landscape of the global health arena have evolved and systematically changed through the years. In collaboration with the WHO, the initiatives such as the *Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS* (UNAIDS), the *Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization*, the *Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria*, and *UNITAID* were coined to tackle a more

specific scope of diseases. Moreover, there is a huge impact on public-private partnerships on product development and medicine innovation.

In line with the *Sustainable Development Goals* and the recently concluded *Millennium Development Goals*, WHO adheres to the goals of such laid out plans of UN by providing safety and protection to the Member States that view health as an integral part of order, progress, and development. Furthermore, it has the role of coordinating with international health sectors through the United Nations' system, the WHO guides and supports the international community to take action and to consider that there is a definite avenue and solution that will cater to the global population.

## CONCLUSION

Given all the past actions of the international community, health is considered as a facet of the sustainable development and human security. Delegates must come up with solutions that are inclusive, attainable, and immediate. Moreover, the shifting trends of the 21st century must be considered. Delegates are strongly encouraged to hold and participate in meaningful debates and discussions that would explore on inclusive and multidimensional approaches to solve the issue at hand.

## GUIDE QUESTIONS

With that, delegates are expected to formulate comprehensive solutions that answer questions such as:

1. What are the feasible questions in preventing outbreaks that are inclusive to developing and developed states?
2. How can the World Health Organization adapt to the shifting trends of the 21st century while fortifying existing mechanisms and innovating new solutions?
3. What can the World Health Organization contribute to alleviating the status of susceptible minorities in the Member States?

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# FORMULATING SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS IN ADDRESSING THE GLOBAL SHORTAGE OF CLEAN WATER

## INTRODUCTION

The global shortage of clean water is one of the most crucial challenges today. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report 2016, there are about 4 billion people—two-thirds of the global population—who experience water scarcity. Moreover, an estimate of 1.8 billion people confides to unsafe and contaminated sources of drinking water in impoverished and even in enriched regions of the world such as parts of Africa, United States of America, Asia, and the Middle East. Consequently, the International Humanitarian Law dictates water as a basic human right. Considering this, *Resolution 64/292* by the United Nations General Assembly, which recognized that the human right to water and sanitation are primarily essential for the recognition of all human rights.

The Water Crisis is a global crisis that is inclusive and prevailing. With causal factors such as inequalities and underdevelopment, access to safe drinking water has produced gradual adversities. The United Nations Human Development stated that global water crisis is

rooted in power, poverty, and inequality, not in physical availability. In the economic aspect, privatization of water resources has reduced access for the poor around the world as prices have risen beyond affordability. Moreover, the huge disparities between and among states as well as competitions within their regions have also been a contributing factor to the global shortage of water.

The United Nations recognizes that the insufficient water supply poses threats to human security and thus provides a coordinating mechanism for all freshwater and sanitation related issues to further strengthen global action. Millions of people have already experienced the lack of access to clean water and many of which have died from diseases associated with unsanitary water supply. Considering this, the World Health Organization forecasts that in the year 2025, half of the world's water sources will be highly susceptible to contamination—an environmental hazard that should not be taken for granted.



# INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS

Relational factors such as rapid urbanization, overpopulation, and poverty are considered as constant contributors to the global shortage of water. With the WHO's primary objective of managing water supply and providing access to safe water, the WHO remains to be the forefront in creating solutions towards this crisis, both in underdeveloped and developed states. Moreover, the organization highlights the crucial role of managing sanitation, wastewater treatment, and creating new and sustainable sources of clean water, which are examples of recommendations in addressing the scarcity of this necessity. Correspondingly, the initiatives were taken by the WHO to increase its actions to promote inclusivity and strive to meet the guidelines and globally accepted standards of the international community.

*Resolution WHA64.24, "Drinking-Water, Sanitation, and Health"* is one of the primary resolutions that address this crisis, it highlighted curative and preventive approaches in adhering to this problem. However, due to the intensification of the crisis, there is huge and important responsibility for the WHO to collaborate with other relevant institutions and

organizations. Together with the *United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund* (UNICEF) and its *WASH* program, the collective term for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, the WHO adheres to its long-term goals of providing safe, accessible and affordable water. WASH is at the forefront and a pioneer program in creating innovative ways to improve the access to water, and building strong infrastructures. These vital pillars are interdependent and crucial in addressing the said problem. Furthermore, the *2005-2015 International Decade Action, "Water for Life"* is deemed to have strengthened international actions to meet water-related development goals targets.

## CONCLUSION

Moving forward, delegates must recommend viable solutions that would consider the situation of rural and urban areas in such a way that would also consider instances wherein drinking water is limited or contaminated. The ideas promoted by SDGs and MDGs supported by institutions and organizations involve every person's ability to act towards water scarcity. Also, the state's ability to collaborate within the international community is tantamount to integrating responses. In totality, this agenda can be resolved not only through fortifying past

actions but also initiating new, innovative and multi-dimensional approaches to achieve sustainability and end this adversity.

## GUIDE QUESTIONS

1. How can we fortify existing solutions and coin innovative mechanisms that will adhere to the problem?
2. How can the World Health Organization incorporate and implement solutions that are inclusive to susceptible minorities that have no access to safe drinking water?
3. What international framework can the Member States utilize that is effective and adaptable?

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