World Health Organization

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`In News`

WHO began when the **Constitution came into force on 7 April 1948** — a date which is now celebrated every year as **World Health Day.** There are more than 7000 people working in 150 country offices, in six regional offices and at the **headquarters in Geneva**, Switzerland. The primary role is to **direct and coordinate international health within the United Nations system.**

`More About WHO`

- The **main areas of work** are:

. health systems

. health through the life-course

. non communicable and communicable diseases

. preparedness, surveillance and response

. corporate services.

  - They support countries, as they coordinate the efforts of governments and partners, including bi- and multilaterals, funds and foundations, civil society organizations and the private sector.
  - WHO, as the **directing and coordinating authority on international health within the United Nations system**, adheres to the UN values of integrity, professionalism and respect for diversity.
  - WHO works worldwide to promote health, keep the world safe, and serve the vulnerable. The goal is to ensure that a **billion more people have universal health coverage, to protect a billion more people from health**

emergencies, and provide a further billion people with better health and well-being.

Functions of WHO

- **For universal health coverage**

. focus on primary health care to improve access to quality essential services

. work towards sustainable financing and financial protection

. improve access to essential medicines and health products

. train the health workforce and advise on labour policies

. support people's participation in national health policies

. improve monitoring, data and information

- **For health emergencies**

. prepare for emergencies by identifying, mitigating and managing risks

. prevent emergencies and support development of tools necessary during outbreaks

. detect and respond to acute health emergencies

. support delivery of essential health services in fragile settings.

- **For health and well being**

. address social determinants

. promote intersectoral approaches for health

. prioritize health in all policies and healthy settings.

- **Through their work, WHO addresses**

. human capital across the life-course

. non communicable diseases prevention

. mental health promotion

. climate change in small island developing states

. antimicrobial resistance

. elimination and eradication of high-impact communicable diseases.

Role of WHO in COVID-19

- WHO has issued a **COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan**, which identifies the major actions countries need to take, and the resources needed to carry them out.
- The health agency's six regional offices, and 150 country offices, work closely with governments around the world to **prepare their health systems for the ravages of COVID-19.**
- With partners, WHO set up the COVID-19 **Solidarity Response Fund**, to ensure patients get the care they need, and frontline workers get essential supplies and information; and to accelerate research and development of a vaccine and treatments for all who need them.
- The internet is awash with information about the pandemic, some of it useful, some of it false or misleading. In the midst of this "infodemic", WHO is producing **accurate, useful guidance** that can help save lives.
- Countries are also being supported by experts, deployed around the world by the WHO's **Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN).** During outbreaks, the network ensures that the right technical expertise and skills are on the ground where and when they are needed most.