Leadership priorities

Our leadership priorities give focus and direction to our work. They are areas where it is vital for WHO to lead—the key issues which stand out from the body of our work.

**WHO values**
WHO has been at the forefront of improving health around the world since 1948.

Health:
- is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, not just the absence of disease or infirmity
- is the fundamental right of every human being, everywhere
- is crucial to peace and security
- depends on the cooperation of all individuals and States
- should be shared: extending knowledge to all peoples is essential

**WHO directs and coordinates international health by:**
- providing leadership on matters critical to health
- shaping the health research agenda
- defining norms and standards for health
- articulating policy options for health
- providing technical support and building capacity to monitor health trends

**WHO leadership priorities**

- **Universal health coverage**
  - The big idea: Universal health coverage combines access to the services needed to achieve good health with financial protection to prevent ill health leading to poverty.
  - What will we do? Respond to demand from countries seeking practical advice on how to take universal health coverage forward.

- **Noncommunicable diseases**
  - The big idea: The rise of noncommunicable diseases has devastating health consequences for individuals, families and communities, and threatens to overwhelm health systems.
  - What will we do? It is a priority to coordinate a coherent, multisectoral response at global, regional and local levels.

- **Social, economic and environmental determinants**
  - The big idea: To improve people’s health outcomes and increase healthy life expectancy requires action across the range of contextual factors associated with ill health as well as inequitable health outcomes.
  - What will we do? We will work with other sectors to act on what causes disease and ill health. Our work will address health determinants and promote equity.

- **Equity in public health**
  - The big idea: Equity in public health depends on access to essential, high-quality and affordable medical technologies.
  - What will we do? Improving access to medical products is central to the achievement of universal health coverage.

- **The International Health Regulations (2005)**
  - The big idea: WHO has a leadership role in establishing the systems that make up the global defence against shocks coming from the microbial world.
  - What will we do? Support countries to put in place the capacities required by the International Health Regulations (2005) and report on progress. We will strengthen our own systems and networks to ensure a rapid and well-coordinated response to public health emergencies.

- **Response to demand from countries seeking practical advice on how to take universal health coverage forward**
  - The big idea: WHO will respond to demand from countries seeking practical advice on how to take universal health coverage forward.
  - What will we do? Respond to demand from countries seeking practical advice on how to take universal health coverage forward.

WHO values
WHO has been at the forefront of improving health around the world since 1948.

Health:
- is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, not just the absence of disease or infirmity
- is the fundamental right of every human being, everywhere
- is crucial to peace and security
- depends on the cooperation of all individuals and States
- should be shared: extending knowledge to all peoples is essential