



**Dear Delegates,**

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 2016 Montessori Model United Nations Conference.

The following pages intend to guide you in the research of the topics that will be debated at MMUN 2016 in committee sessions. Please note this guide only provides the basis for your investigation. It is your responsibility to find as much information necessary on the topics and how they relate to the country you represent. Such information should help you write your Position Paper, where you need to cite the references in the text and finally list all references in the Modern Language Association (MLA) format.

The more information and understanding you acquire on the two topics, the more you will be able to influence the Resolution writing process through debates [formal and informal caucuses], and the MMUN experience as a whole. Please feel free to contact us if and when you face challenges in your research or formatting your Position Papers.

We encourage you to learn all you can about your topics first and then study your country with regard to the two selected topics. Please remember that both committee members need to be well versed and ready to debate both topics.

Enjoy researching and writing your Position Papers.

We look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

MMUN Secretariat Team

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## World Health Organization

### World Health Organization (WHO)

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The World Health Organization's Constitution came into force on 7 April 1948 – a date we now celebrate every year as World Health Day.

WHO supports Member States as they coordinate the efforts of multiple sectors of the government and partners – including bi- and multilaterals, funds and foundations, civil society organizations and private sector – to attain their health objectives and support their national health policies and strategies.

The WHO is the directing and coordinating authority on international health within the United Nations' system.

They accomplish this by:

- Providing leadership on matters critical to health and engaging in partnerships where joint action is needed;
- Shaping the research agenda and stimulating the generation, translation and dissemination of valuable knowledge;
- Setting norms and standards and promoting and monitoring their implementation;
- Articulating ethical and evidence-based policy options;
- Providing technical support, catalyzing change, and building sustainable institutional capacity; and
- Monitoring the health situation and assessing health trends.

The World Health Assembly is the decision-making body of WHO. It is attended by delegations from all WHO Member States and focuses on a specific health agenda prepared by the Executive Board. The main functions of the World Health Assembly are to determine the policies of the Organization, appoint the Director-General, supervise financial policies, and review and approve the proposed program budget.

Source: <http://www.who.int/about/what-we-do/en/>

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# Ending Epidemics of AIDS, Malaria, and Other Diseases

## Topic Background

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Preventable diseases are diseases that are able to be cured with a vaccine or medication, but these often wreak havoc on countries which cannot afford such medical care. According to the United Nations Foundation, every 20 seconds a child dies from a preventable vaccine-preventable disease, and each year more than 1 million children die from malaria. Some of these diseases are polio, malaria, measles, diphtheria, mumps, yellow fever, and meningitis. Many organizations work in collaboration to provide the necessary vaccinations, medicines, and care to people in the third-world suffering from these illnesses.

By region, Africa has the highest number of total preventable diseases related deaths, with 4,202,000 for 2008.<sup>1</sup> One of the main reasons for this problem is the number of children which are not vaccinated at birth. 30 million infants a year do not receive immunizations.<sup>2</sup> Although there are many programs in place, it is necessary to continue to provide the same level of service every year to these nations. The World Health Organization has many programs in place to provide immunizations to children in developing nations; they reach 75% of 130 million babies born every year.<sup>3</sup> However, in some regions of the world and in some countries they are reaching only 10% to 20% of all the people in need. In Kenya, the number of vaccinations being provided is on a downward trend.

Preventable diseases come in many forms. In Sudan, the citizens are infected with an estimated 50% of all worldwide malaria cases.<sup>4</sup> In Chad, polio is a serious problem with the disease

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<sup>1</sup> “Estimates of disease burden and cost-effectiveness.” World Health Organization. <http://bit.ly/ohkFZL>

<sup>2</sup> “Vaccine Preventable Diseases Still Take Toll in the Developing World.” World Bank. April 6, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> “Vaccine Preventable Diseases Still Take Toll in the Developing World.” World Bank. April 6, 2006.  
<http://bit.ly/VFgdd2>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> “Malaria Prevention and Control.” United Nations Development Programme: Sudan. <http://bit.ly/W3oKTu>

spreading throughout the country. And in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, nearly 12,000 children die every year due to diseases that could have been prevented.<sup>5</sup>

Many reasons exist for the decreasing numbers of vaccines being provided around the world. One reason is that these vaccinations are able to be provided due to the generosity of monetary donations. If the monetary donations from third parties run out, vaccinations cannot be provided. Furthermore, a lack of competent staff to provide the vaccinations and the necessary documentation to record the event can lead to a lack of access for people. Finally, most of these countries with this problem lack an adequate healthcare system to provide for all the needs of its populace.

### Past International Action

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The UN Millennium Development Goal Number 6 focuses on preventing diseases such as malaria and other major diseases. The goal specifically focuses on the preventable disease malaria, and focuses on initiatives such as providing insecticide-treated bed nets, mosquito nets, and anti-malarial drugs. The goal states that “external funding is helping to reduce malaria incidence and deaths, but additional support is needed.”<sup>6</sup>

The World Health Organization (WHO) does a lot to try to eradicate this problem. For example, they monitor drug resistances, diagnose diseases, provide technical assistance and support research. Also, they have made an online monitoring system to track the mortality rate of children and the percent of the country’s population that gets vaccinated. The WHO acts around the world and does a lot to eradicate this problem.

An additional example of action being taken is how the drug company Pfizer donates millions of dollars worth of drugs to developing countries to combat diseases such as Trachoma. It works in conjunction with the non-profit International Trachoma Initiative to distribute the drug. So far, the drug has been distributed to 11 countries out of 55 which desperately need the medication.<sup>7</sup> Pfizer has pledged to continue to distribute to medicine to those that need it.

Many NGOs work in regions around the world to help curb the spread of preventable diseases. One NGO is Nothing But Nets. This organization helps people in African countries fight malaria through the use of bed nets and anti-malarial drugs. Anti-malarial drugs are very expensive and most people in this region with the highest risk of contracting the disease do not have the means

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<sup>5</sup> “Pneumonia and diarrhoea: Tackling the deadliest diseases for the world’s poorest children.” United Nations Children’s Fund. June 2012. <http://uni.cf/KnhBsw>

<sup>6</sup> “Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases.” Millennium Development Goals. <http://bit.ly/15zVjB>

<sup>7</sup> Dugger, Celia W. “Preventable Disease Blinds Poor in Third World.” March 31, 2006. <http://nyti.ms/WFwZEB>

to buy the medicine. Therefore, Nothing But Nets provides a cheaper alternative of providing bed nets to people in Africa, as well as anti-malarial drugs to the most in-need. Nothing But Nets is just one example of the importance of the work of third-party organizations in curbing these diseases.

## Possible Solutions

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The country of Uganda has the highest rates of malaria in the world. Between 70,000 and 100,000 children die every year because of malaria. The disease also has a devastating impact on the poor, with estimates that families spend 25% of their income on addressing malaria. Solutions to this issue must take into account not only making medicine “affordable”, but also how to define “affordable” in this context; what is the appropriate amount of income to be spent on access to basic healthcare and vaccines? What should the United Nations do to ensure that access to medicine isn’t preventing populations from other basic needs and human rights. To ensure affordability, some have proposed the United Nations partner with pharmaceutical companies and national governments to guarantee low costs for these medicines in developing countries, while other view this as a violation of the commercial and patent rights of these companies.

In 2010, nearly 600 people died from dengue fever in Brazil. Preventing dengue fever depends on controlling mosquitoes. A mobile app developed in Brazil uses Twitter to track dengue fever outbreaks across the country.<sup>8</sup> The idea of mobile health is proliferating quickly throughout the world, and more and more mobile-technology based solutions are coming to the forefront to track and even determine treatment for diseases. How can the United Nations use mobile technology to lower the cost, raise the accessibility, and increase data collection on these critical diseases?

Lastly, a major impediment to ensuring access to life-saving and outbreak-stopping medicines is simply the geography of different countries, and the fact that many populations may be very hard to reach through traditional transportation methods. If a city is many hours away from major populated hubs, and has a low population, it can be hard to find the funding to supply the area with proper medical resources. To help resolve this issue in some parts of sub-Saharan Africa as well as low-population-density areas such as Mongolia, some Member States have proposed using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVS), also known as drones, to deliver critical medical resources to those communities that need them. This would require more funding for research and could be a costly solution, so any plan to address this needs significant detail in how to execute any such plan to provide rural, mountainous, and other hard-to-reach communities with the vaccines and medicines they critically need.

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<sup>8</sup> Keiran, Monique. “New apps help virus information go viral.” Times Colonist. January 12, 2013.  
<http://bit.ly/VZzjYz>

## Further Research

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### *Guiding Questions*

1. How can the UN and the WHO reach out to those in need of vaccinations in remote communities or in underdeveloped countries?
2. Does your country have problems with preventable diseases? How has it worked to combat them?
3. Does your country provide funding or receive funding to combat preventable diseases?

### *Research Sources*

- [“Preventable Disease Blinds Poor in Third World”](#)
- [Millennium Development Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases](#)
- [World Health Organization: Vaccine-preventable Diseases](#)
- [UN Foundation: Global Health](#)

### *Questions:*

1. According to the United Nations Foundation, how often does a child die from a preventable disease?
2. Which region suffers the highest number of total preventable diseases related deaths?
3. What percentage of global malaria cases occur in Sudan?
4. Pfizer and the International Trachoma Initiative have collaborated to provide medicine to \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ countries which need it?
5. What is the objective of Nothing But Nets?

### *Answers:*

1. Every 20 seconds
2. Africa
3. 50%
4. 11 out of 55
5. Their objective is to provide cheaper mosquito nets to developing countries

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