



The Hague International Model United Nations

Forum: Sustainable Development Committee Sub-Commission 1 (SDC 1)

Issue: Follow-up on 2024 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development concerning End poverty [SDG1], and good health and wellbeing [SDG3]

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Introduction

The 17th High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) was held from the 8th of July until the 17th of July 2024 in New York under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) following the Sustainable Development Summit (SDG) of 2023. This year's forum theme was "Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions", and the HLPF reviewed the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in-depth: SDG 1 (No poverty), SDG 2 (Zero hunger), SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 16 (Peace, justice, and strong institutions) and SDG 17 (Partnership and goals).

More specifically, the HLPF focused on ending poverty in all its forms everywhere, ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture; taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts; promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development; providing access to justice for all; and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels, strengthening the means of implementation and revitalising the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

This report will focus on the Follow-up of the 17th session of the HLPF and the main findings of the

political forum in regard to SDGs 1 and 3, two of the fundamental SDGs that are part of the 2030 Agenda and still constitute severe issues in the Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs), such as Member States in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Despite global efforts to eradicate poverty (SDG 1) and ensure good health and well-being (SDG 3), significant gaps remain in these regions, mainly due to economic instability, conflict, and insufficient infrastructure.

Definition of Key Terms

Extreme poverty

Extreme poverty refers to people having to live on less than \$2.15 per day.¹

Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs)

Member States are categorised as LEDCs based on three factors: low income, little access to good nutrition, health care, and education; and high dependency of the Member State's economy on farm or land.² LEDCs mostly include African and Latin American countries.³

More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs)

Member States are categorised as MEDCs based on their good living standards, which include good education, health care, and employment opportunities, the economy's dependence on secondary industries and service industries, and good infrastructure and transport systems.⁴ MEDCs include North American, European, and some Asian and Oceanian countries.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

A set of 17 global goals established by the UN in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda.

¹ *Where in the world do the poor live? It depends on how poverty is defined.* (n.d.). <https://datatopics.worldbank.org/world-development-indicators/stories/where-do-the-poor-live.html>

² *less economically developed countries.* (n.d.). Britannica Kids. <https://kids.britannica.com/students/article/less-economically-developed-countries/604088>

³ Less economically developed country. (n.d.). *Oxford Reference*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acref/9780199599868.013.1066>

⁴ *more economically developed countries.* (n.d.). Britannica Kids. <https://kids.britannica.com/students/article/more-economically-developed-countries/604089>



Figure 1: Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development ⁵

Universal Healthcare Coverage (UHC)

UHC refers to all people having access to the full range of quality health services they need, when and where they need them, without financial hardship. It covers the full continuum of essential health services, from health promotion to prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care.⁶

Background Information

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The United Nations introduced the 17 SDGs as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted in 2015. The SDGs are an urgent call for action by all Member States, both MEDCs and LEDCs, to be part of a global partnership. They cover a range of social, economic, and environmental objectives, designed to be integrated, indivisible, and transformative. They succeeded the Millennium Development Goals, expanding the scope and inclusiveness of the objectives. The SDGs are universal, applying to all Member States irrespective of their classification as MEDC or LEDC and they are interconnected. They have a connected approach that emphasizes the indivisibility of global challenges and solutions. Their overall objective is to leave no one behind by engendering equitable and sustainable development around the world.

⁵ Social Development for Sustainable Development | Division for Inclusive Social Development (DISD). (n.d.). <https://social.desa.un.org/2030agenda-sdgs>

⁶ World Health Organization: WHO. (2019, July 16). *Universal health coverage*. https://www.who.int/health-topics/universal-health-coverage#tab=tab_1

The SDGs have experienced certain successes and failures as of now. Progress has been observed in the objectives of renewable energy adoption, internet access, and healthcare improvements. For example, a 27% decrease has been noted in Human Immunodeficiency Viruses (HIV) since 2015.⁷ However, there are objectives that are still lacking, and not that much progress has been made. In fact, as of 2024, only 17% of the targets of the SDG targets are still on track and the annual financing gap for developing countries to achieve the SDGs stands at \$4 trillion. This was mostly due to the ongoing impacts of COVID-19, climate change, and global economic instability, which emphasizes the need for innovative and collaborative approaches to accelerate SDG implementation.

The High-Level Political Forum Overview and Objectives

The High-Level Political Forum is the United Nations' central platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs. Established at the Rio+20 Conference in 2012, the HLPF meets annually under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and every four years at the General Assembly level as an SDG Summit. It is intended to provide an environment for governments, the private sector, civil society, professionals, and other stakeholders to share progress, and identify challenges and solutions for accelerating SDG achievement. The main objectives of the HLPF include in-depth reviews of specific, presentation of Voluntary National Reviews (VRNs) by UN Member States to present progress and share best practices as well as provide policy guidance to ensure coherence at the global, regional, and national levels, and promotion of partnerships and multi-stakeholder collaboration for the implementation of the SDGs.

The 17th session of HLPF (2024)

The theme of the 2024 HLPF is "Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient, and innovative solutions." The forum conducted in-depth reviews of SDGs 1,2,13 and 16. The forum provided a platform for exchanging new solutions to address emerging and developing challenges, such as climate crises and post-pandemic recovery while ensuring everyone is included.

Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG 1)

SDG 1 has the objective of ending poverty in all its forms everywhere. SDG 1 is especially important during this time as poverty eradication efforts have been impeded by global crises, like COVID-19 and climate change. An Expert Group Meeting as part of the HLPF 2024, in fact,

⁷ Bouza, E., Arribas, J. R., Alejos, B., Bernardino, J. I., Coiras, M., Coll, P., Del Romero, J., Fuster, M. J., Górgolas, M., Gutiérrez, A., Gracia, D., Hernando, V., Martínez-Picado, J., Sesmero, J. M. M., Martínez, E., Moreno, S., Mothe, B., Navarro, M. L., Podzamczer, D., . . . Palomo, E. (2022). Past and future of HIV infection. A document based on expert opinion. *Revista Española De Quimioterapia*, 35(2), 131–156. <https://doi.org/10.37201/req/083.2021>

revealed that the strengthening of innovative financing mechanisms, strengthened social safety nets, and climate-adaptive strategies could be beneficial towards the achievement of the goal. In regard to the process made, if current trends continue, 575 million people will still be living in extreme poverty, and only one-third of countries will have halved their national poverty levels by 2030.⁸ Despite the expansion of social protection during the COVID-19 crisis, over 4 billion people remain entirely unprotected.⁹ The number of people living in extreme poverty increased by 23 million from 2019 to 2022, which emphasizes the need for renewed efforts.¹⁰

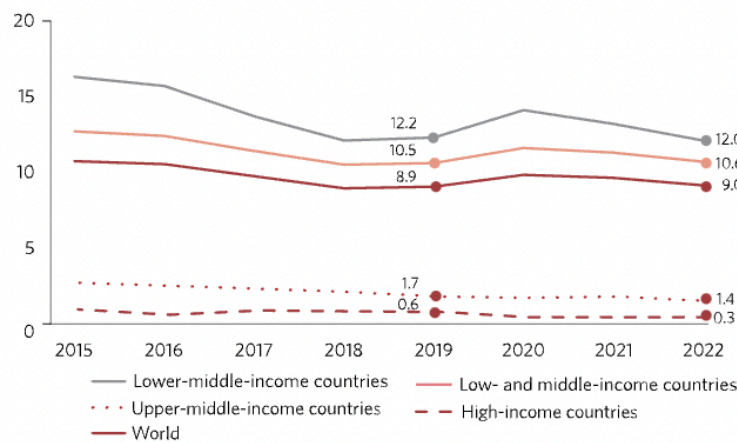


Figure 2: Proportion of the population living below \$2.15/day, by country income level, 2015–2022 (percentage)¹¹

In 2024, the forum focused on the continuous inequalities and the creation of enabling environments for poverty eradication. The forum discussed using emerging technologies for financial incorporation and economic improvement, strengthening social protection systems to reduce inequalities, particularly for marginalized groups, and enabling sustainable livelihoods through education, skills development, and access to good quality work.

Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG 3)

SDG 3 aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being at all ages. Over the last 15 years, the number of childhood deaths has been cut in half. This proves that it is possible to win the fight against almost every disease. Still, governments are spending a very high amount of

⁸ United Nations Statistics Division. (n.d.). — *SDG indicators*. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2023/goal-01/>

⁹ Dpicampaigns. (2024, January 25). Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere - United Nations Sustainable Development. United Nations Sustainable Development. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/poverty/>

¹⁰ United Nations Statistics Division. (n.d.). — *SDG indicators*. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2024/Goal-01/>

¹¹ Ibid

money and resources on treating illnesses that are surprisingly easy to prevent. The new goal of Good Health for all, globally, promotes healthy lifestyles, preventive measures, and modern, efficient healthcare for all. Despite the tremendous gains made in combating diseases like HIV and in reducing child mortality, global health challenges persist through inequity in health service access and the impact of pandemics like COVID-19.

Regarding the 2024 HLPF, the forum has pointed out the connections between health and other SDGs, emphasizing the role of health in the eradication of poverty and the realization of sustainable development. Key recommendations include improvement of current health infrastructure, particularly in LEDCs, investing in preventive care and health, and promoting UHC as a stepping stone for future resilience against health crises. Innovations in health service delivery, such as telemedicine and community health programs, were recognized for their value in expanding access and improving outcomes.¹²

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

UN and International involvement

With the UN having adopted the 2030 Agenda, it consequently constitutes the main forum for advocacy for the SDGs and has played a vital role in addressing SDGs 1 and 3. The UN also contributes to the funding and direct actions as part of the efforts made by the organization to address the SDGs. Beyond raising awareness, it financially supports governments and NGOs through technical expertise and policy guidance. These programs, such as the UNDP, create improved poverty alleviation and access to health care, including vaccination and maternal health, through partnerships with WHO and UNICEF. Agencies like the WFP and UNHCR are involved in emergency aid during disasters for the most vulnerable—a multi-faceted way in which the UN tries to eradicate poverty and improve world health.

Relevant UN Resolutions, Treaties and Events

¹² Goal 3: Good health and well-being - The Global Goals. (2024, January 23). The Global Goals. <https://www.globalgoals.org/goals/3-good-health-and-well-being/>

- United Nations General Assembly Resolution 70/1, 25 September 2015 (A/RES/70/1)¹³ - Adopted in 2015, the resolution established the Sustainable Development Goals as part of the 2030 Agenda.
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 16 December 1966 (GA Resolution 2200A (XXI))¹⁴ - The Covenant was adopted in 1966, and it emphasizes the right to normal living standards, including adequate food, clothing, and housing. It also aims for the continuous improvement of living standards.
- United Nations General Assembly Resolution 73/2, 10 October 2018 (A/RES/73/2)¹⁵ - The Political Declaration on the Fight Against Noncommunicable Diseases aims to reduce premature mortality from noncommunicable diseases through prevention and treatment.
- The Political Declaration on the Fight Against Noncommunicable Diseases¹⁶ aimed to reduce premature mortality from noncommunicable diseases through prevention and treatment, which aligns with SDG 3.
- United Nations General Assembly Resolution 74/20, 12 December 2019 (A/RES/74/20)¹⁷ - The resolution on Global Health and Foreign Policy: An Inclusive Approach to Strengthening Health Systems focuses on promoting UHC and addressing social determinants of health.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): Supports efforts for the eradication of poverty, with a focus on reducing income inequality, and improving access to social protection and economic resilience. An example is the Strengthening National Capacities for Poverty Reduction Strategies, which aids Member States in designing evidence-based policies.
- World Health Organization (WHO): The WHO provides global leadership in health matters, coordinating responses to pandemics, and improving universal health coverage. An example of the WHO's actions is the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-Being, which contributes to the efforts made with 13 global health organizations to accelerate progress toward UHC.

¹³ A/res/70/1. (n.d.).

<https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2Fres%2F70%2F1&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>

¹⁴ OHCHR. (n.d.). *2. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)*.

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/resources/educators/human-rights-education-training/2-international-covenant-economic-social-and-cultural-rights-1966>

¹⁵ UN. General Assembly (73rd sess. : 2018-2019) & UN. General Assembly. High-Level Meeting of Heads of State and Government on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (2018 : New York). (2018, October 17). *Political declaration of the 3rd High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases :: resolution /: adopted by the General Assembly*. United Nations Digital Library System.

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¹⁶ NCDs. (n.d.). *UN political Declaration on Prevention and Control of NCDs*. World Health Organization - Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean.

<https://www.emro.who.int/noncommunicable-diseases/publications/un-political-declaration-on-prevention-and-control-of-ncds.html>

¹⁷ *Global health and foreign policy: an inclusive approach to strengthening health systems (2020) • Page 1 • Plan International - Girls' Rights Platform - Girls' rights are human rights: Positioning girls at the heart of the international agenda*. (n.d.).

<https://www.girlsrightsplatform.org/entity/lfwsvwqc?page=1&file=1582651236950x395wtgxyfb.pdf>

- United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF): Focuses on maternal and child health and nutrition programs with programs targeting malnutrition, immunization, and early childhood development. The Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement has contributed to the attainment of its objectives in more than 60 Member States.
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO): Deals with food insecurity and malnutrition for the implementation of SDG 1 and SDG 3. Projects such as the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) provide governments and humanitarian agencies with tools to fight against hunger.

Programs and Contributions by UN Agencies

European Union (EU)

With its serious financial and policy commitments, the EU is one of the major contributors toward attaining SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 3 (Good Health). The European Union remains the biggest donor globally for development aid; hence, it plays an important role in poverty reduction and healthcare projects under the European Development Fund. Within the EU's borders, there is a Social Inclusion Strategy, which deals with income inequality and access to social protection. Another initiative, the EU4Health program, reinforces health systems and health crisis preparedness. However, challenges are still present in addressing disparities.

United States of America (USA)

The USA focuses on the use of innovation, technology, and public-private partnerships to attain SDG 1 and SDG 3. The specific contributions include funding global vaccination campaigns and healthcare infrastructure development, especially in LEDCs, supporting poverty reduction through international aid programs, such as the Feed the Future Initiative to enhance food security and agricultural productivity, and encouraging collaboration among governments, NGOs, and the private sector in the development of sustainable and scalable solutions for poverty alleviation and healthcare.

India

India focuses on addressing poverty and health challenges with the aid of domestic policies. Some Indian domestic policies include: the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, a financial initiative which aims for economic inclusion through the provision of bank accounts to the underprivileged, which will foster economic participation. Ayushman Bharat Yojana, which constitutes the world’s largest health insurance scheme, offers medical coverage to over 500 million individuals,

primarily from low-income families. Another initiative constitutes the National Health Mission (NHM) which concentrates on the improvement of healthcare delivery, especially in rural and low-income areas. Even though the NHM has contributed to the improvement of infrastructure over the last 20 years, there is still much more that needs to be done to improve health security.

African Union (AU)

The African Union has made several efforts in order to address extreme poverty and health inequalities through numerous initiatives, including the Agenda 2063. This initiative includes a comprehensive framework that encourages growth, social development, and sustainable economic progress across Africa. Another tactic that the AU has implemented is the African Strategy from 2016 to 2030, which aims to improve healthcare systems and surveillance systems and achieve universal health coverage.

Save the Children

The Non-Governmental Organization focuses on increasing access to healthcare, education, and nutrition for children in impoverished areas. Recently, its initiatives have focused on reducing child mortality and the provision of emergency health support in war conflict zones and during pandemics, which connect to SDGs 1 and 3.

The Elders

The Elders is an international non-governmental organization founded by Nelson Mandela in 2007, comprising independent global leaders who work together for peace, justice, human rights, and a sustainable planet. It constitutes an independent group of global leaders that promotes universal health coverage, gender equality, and the alleviation of poverty by adopting sustainable development strategies.

Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC)

The BRAC is based in Bangladesh, BRAC focuses on empowering communities in the alleviation of extreme poverty through health, education, and economic development programs with operations in South Asia and Africa.

The Global Fund to AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

The Global Fund to AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is a partnership organization that contributes to the eradication of three common diseases, namely AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. The organization invests 4 billion USD annually to help achieve this goal. It operates in more than 100 Member States and cooperates closely with the governments and the private sector. Since its establishment in 2002, the Fund has saved over 50 million lives through its initiatives.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
April, 15 th , 1919	The organization Save the Children was founded by Eglantyne Jebb in the United Kingdom.
December, 16 th , 1966	The adoption of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights by the United Nations General Assembly (GA).
April, 15 th , 1972	The BRAC was founded.
January, 1988	The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria was established, but it officially began operating in 2002.
January, 2000	Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance was established with the support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.
July, 2007	The organization Elders was created by Nelson Mandela in Johannesburg, South Africa.
September, 8 th , 2000	The Millennium development Goals were adopted during the Millennium Summit held in New York.
June, 22 nd , 2012	The Rio+20 Conference, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
September, 25 th , 2015	The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, including the 17 SDGs, was established under the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 70/1, replacing the MDGs.
October, 10 th , 2018	The Political Declaration on the Fight Against Noncommunicable Diseases was adopted under UN General Assembly Resolution 73/2 (A/RES/73/2).
December, 12 th , 2019	The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 74/20 (A/RES/74/20) was adopted.

July, 17th, 2024

The High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development convened in New York under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The MDGs constitute 8 goals adopted in September of 2000 with eight goals and 21 targets as part of the Millennium Declaration. They constituted a series of measurable health indicators and economic indicators for each target. While they did have certain achievements, such as the number of deaths of children under 5 years of age falling from 12.7 million in 1990 to 6.3 million in 2013 and new HIV infections declining by 38% between 2001 and 2013, as a whole the goals did not succeed in their main goals. For this reason, the SDGs superseded them.¹⁸ In fact, “UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon links the lack of progress to 'unmet commitments, inadequate resources, lack of focus and accountability, and insufficient interest in sustainable development' (UN, 2010). For others, the MDGs cannot be fully met because of how the goals were designed (Clemens, Kenny, & Moss, 2007).”¹⁹

Global Vaccination Programs

There have been numerous attempts to implement vaccination programs. An example is Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, which was created in 2000 as an international organization with the aim of improving access to new and underused vaccines for children in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and LEDCs. It is a partnership of the public and private sectors which has the goal of saving children’s lives and protecting people’s health through widespread immunization.

Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative

The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative was a program begun in 1996 by the World Bank and IMF to reduce debt loads for the world’s poorest nations so that they could devote more funds to healthcare and poverty alleviation. Critics charge that it often came with draconian economic reforms that restricted social spending, but it did succeed in debt reduction for over 37 countries.

Social Protection Floors (SPFs)

The ILO developed SPFs to ensure that all people have access to primary health care and a minimum level of income. They thus became adopted by countries like South Africa to help the

¹⁸ World Health Organization: WHO. (2018, February 19). Millennium Development Goals (MDGS). [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/millennium-development-goals-\(mdgs\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/millennium-development-goals-(mdgs))

¹⁹ Fehling, M., Nelson, B. D., & Venkatapuram, S. (2013). Limitations of the Millennium Development Goals: a literature review. *Global Public Health*, 8(10), 1109–1122. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2013.845676>

communities that were vulnerable. While they are effective in the alleviation of poverty and the improvement of access to health care, their implementation is very often faced with budgetary constraints and limited coverage in fragile states.

Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Initiatives

SDG 3 has benefited a great deal from efforts toward UHC because it ensures the provision of essential medical services with financial protection. Some countries, such as Thailand, have implemented successful UHC systems and, through that, have reduced health inequity greatly and also improved health outcomes. In contrast, differences in implementation issues such as budget gaps, personnel shortages, and quality differences, especially in low-income settings, limit its global scalability. Notwithstanding the continued challenges, UHC remains a cornerstone of global efforts toward resilience and health equity.

Possible Solutions

Strengthening of international cooperation

In order for SDG 1 and SDG 3 to be achieved to a greater extent, there needs to be global collaboration with the governments of all Member States and organizations. In this process, UN agencies, such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and NGOs, such as the Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria can help in this process. Some other key actors that have the ability to aid in this process are the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank through funding for the achievement of the SDGs specifically SDG 1 and SDG 3.

Integration of Social Protection Systems

Social protection systems are vital tools that can help with the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 3. The protection can be achieved through pilot Universal Basic Income (UBI) programs that have the ability to provide financial security and stability to low-income families, which reduces poverty and the respective poverty-related health risks. Another way is through the improvement of Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs) that connect financial support to education and healthcare. An example is Brazil’s Bolsa Familia program adopted in 2003. Its main objective is to provide financial assistance to low-income families, especially those with children under six, to achieve better health and educational results.

Strengthening of domestic capabilities

The strengthening of a community on a domestic and national level could help achieve the 1st and 3rd SDGs. This can be achieved through community-driven initiatives that can help develop tailored poverty and healthcare solutions that can include, cooperative farming to boost food security and community health worker programs to improve primary healthcare. One such program is the Community Health Worker (CHW) program to achieve better primary health. It trains community members in order to provide basic care of health, such as vaccination, prevention of disease, maternal and child care, and health education.

Improvement of healthcare systems

There is a need for governments to invest more in health systems in order to ensure that health systems are resilient in terms of emergencies, thereby enhancing standard healthcare services. That would involve investing in worker training, health infrastructure, and pandemic and global health catastrophe response capability. While Member States have enhanced their capacities for emergency response through programs such as the WHO's Health Emergency Program, the COVID-19 pandemic really exposed weaknesses in international health systems that require continued attention and funding if they are to be properly addressed.

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