



**WORLD HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION**

*Study Guide*



### AGENDA

***Global Health Preparedness and Response:  
Strengthening International Cooperation to  
Mitigate Pandemics, with special emphasis  
on the recent MPOX outbreak.***

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## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Dear Delegates,

We look forward to interacting with you, in The World Health Organisation. The WHO dedicates their work towards ensuring the well-being of all individuals . Keeping this ambitious goal in mind, we wish you all the best, as you strive to take up this daunting challenge.

We encourage you to prepare thoroughly, venture outside the box, and garner immense knowledge of the topic. Refrain from restricting yourself to just the study guide, and find what few others would know.

Make sure to remember that you are representing a portfolio and not yourself! Be confident and present *their* stance on the agenda, even if your perspective has major differences.

Once again, we would like to wish you all the very best, and we hope that you await this fruitful experience as much as we do!  
See you there,

***Varad Dongre,***  
***Chairperson***

***Sawai Sharma,***  
***Vice Chair***

# COMMITTEE INFORMATION

The WHO, a United Nations agency established in 1948, leads global health efforts. Its mission is to ensure everyone worldwide enjoys the highest attainable standard of health. This endeavor involves combating infectious diseases like COVID-19 and Ebola, fostering healthier lives through initiatives like vaccination and nutrition programs, and tackling pressing global health issues such as climate change and antibiotic resistance. The WHO serves as a vital coordinator in international health emergencies.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has established several key treaties and resolutions to enhance global health preparedness and response. The International Health Regulations (IHR) (2005) provide a framework for international disease surveillance and response. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, negotiations are underway for a new Pandemic Preparedness and Response Accord to address critical gaps identified during the crisis.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE AGENDA

Due to our ever growing populations, making sure everyone is at the best health attainable was always going to be a challenge. Challenges such as global conflicts are always going to be limiting factors for us to be prepared for new outbreaks. This is why we need to **strengthen global cooperation to prevent further outbreaks.**



## Global Cooperation

**Global cooperation** means collaborative efforts between countries to address shared challenges like climate change and pandemics. This includes diplomatic agreements, joint research, and resource sharing.

Global cooperation offers significant benefits. For instance, international collaboration played a crucial role in the development and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, reaching over 12 billion doses globally. This demonstrates the power of collective action in addressing global health crises.

Unfortunately, several factors hinder global healthcare collaboration. Political instability, economic disparities, and data privacy concerns pose significant challenges. Mistrust between nations, particularly regarding intellectual property and resource sharing, further complicates cooperation. Cultural and linguistic barriers, along with inconsistent healthcare practices across countries, create obstacles in coordinating initiatives. Addressing these limitations requires an effective approach that promotes building trust, promoting equitable resource distribution, strengthening data security measures, and fostering open communication and collaboration among nations.

# RESPONSE TO A OUTBREAK

## Historical Responses

Early responses often focused on religious or spiritual explanations, attributing outbreaks to divine punishment or supernatural forces. This led

to practices like ritualistic sacrifices, purification ceremonies, and the isolation of the afflicted.

With the rise of scientific understanding, responses shifted towards more practical measures. Quarantine, isolation, and the restriction of movement became common practices to contain the spread of disease. Early forms of sanitation and hygiene, such as handwashing and the disposal of waste, were also implemented.

The development of vaccines and antibiotics in the 20th century revolutionized disease control. Mass vaccination campaigns and the development of effective treatments significantly reduced the impact of many infectious diseases.

## **Global Cooperation For an effective response to an outbreak**

Effective global cooperation for disease response necessitates rapid information sharing, including real-time data exchange and transparent communication between countries. It requires equitable access to resources, such as vaccines and treatments, through global funding mechanisms and technology transfer. Strengthening global health systems, including investing in infrastructure and addressing health inequities, is crucial. Fostering international research collaborations, sharing knowledge and expertise, and building trust and collaboration among nations are essential for effective and coordinated responses to global health threats.

## Examples throughout history

The Black Death (1347 - 1351), caused by *Yersinia pestis*, killed 75–200 million people, wiping out up to 60% of Europe's population. Responses included quarantines, isolation, and religious rituals, leading to major societal and economic changes.

Smallpox (eradicated in 1980) is a deadly disease caused by the Variola virus that killed hundreds of millions over millennia. Vaccination efforts, starting with Edward Jenner's vaccine, led to its global eradication by 1980.

The Spanish Flu (1918 - 1920), caused by the H1N1 virus, infected 500 million people and killed 50–100 million. Responses included mask mandates and social distancing, but medical limitations worsened its toll.

COVID-19 (2019 - Present), caused by SARS-CoV-2, has resulted in over 6.9 million deaths worldwide. Responses included lockdowns, mass vaccinations, and international efforts to improve healthcare systems.

## RECENT MPOX OUTBREAK

The recent MPOX outbreak, caused by the clade IIb strain of the virus, began in May 2022 and rapidly spread globally, with over 100,000 confirmed cases reported across 122 countries, including 115 where MPOX was not previously endemic. Primarily transmitted through close contact, it caused significant concern. The World Health Organization declared it a Public Health Emergency of International Concern in July 2022, recognizing its global significance.

The virus that causes MPOX was first discovered in 1958 in colonies of monkeys kept for research. The first human case of MPOX was recorded in a 9 month old child in 1970 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mpox is endemic in parts of Central and West Africa, where it has been circulating for many years. Most of these countries where MPOX is prevalent lack sufficient development in healthcare and living standards. Due to this there is a higher chance of MPOX transmitted from person to person. Also, the recent outbreak saw significant global spread, with cases reported in numerous countries worldwide.

Mpox primarily spreads through close contact with an infected person, including skin-to-skin contact, sexual contact, and respiratory droplets during prolonged face-to-face contact. It can also spread through contact with contaminated materials or objects used by an infected person, such as bedding or towels.

Mpox can be prevented through vaccination, avoiding close contact with infected individuals, maintaining good hygiene, and limiting contact with infected animals.

## **LIMITING FACTORS**

**Political Instability and Conflict:** Wars, civil unrest, and political tensions can severely disrupt healthcare systems and hinder the flow of aid, making coordinated pandemic responses challenging.

**Economic Disparities:** Unequal resource distribution leaves many countries ill-equipped to detect, prevent, and respond to outbreaks effectively. This

disparity hinders equitable access to vaccines, treatments, and essential medical supplies.

**Data Privacy and Security Concerns:** Sharing sensitive patient data across borders is crucial for research and global surveillance, but concerns about data privacy and security can hinder information exchange.

**Lack of Trust and Transparency:** Mistrust between nations, particularly regarding intellectual property rights and resource sharing, can impede collaboration on vaccine development, treatment distribution, and research efforts.

**Cultural and Linguistic Barriers:** Differences in cultural norms, languages, and communication styles can create significant obstacles in coordinating international responses, sharing information effectively, and building trust among nations.

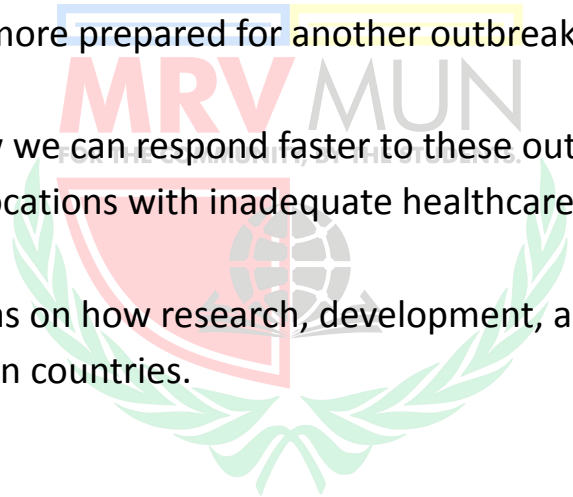
**Lack of Standardized Protocols and Guidelines:** Inconsistent healthcare practices and regulations across countries can hinder the smooth implementation of coordinated responses and the efficient sharing of resources.

## **QARMA - Questions a Resolution Must Answer**

1. How can we develop a systematic, strategic plan in order to respond quicker to outbreaks?
2. How can we prevent these outbreaks from happening?
3. How can we increase international cooperation to benefit global health?
4. How can we take learnings from past pandemics and epidemics and use that knowledge to help us from any future outbreaks?

# **SUGGESTED MODERATED CAUCUS TOPICS**

1. Discussing how we can increase global cooperation.
2. Discussing how we can use past epidemics and pandemics as guides on how to be more prepared for another outbreak.
3. Reviewing how we can respond faster to these outbreaks, with emphasis on locations with inadequate healthcare.
4. Discussing ideas on how research, development, and data would be shared between countries.



## **BIBLIOGRAPHY AND FURTHER READING LINKS**

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<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

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<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cvg35w27gzno>

<https://journalofethics.ama-assn.org/article/why-us-health-care-should-think-globally/2016-07>

<https://www.thelancet.com/>

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)



# PRO TIPS

1. Go beyond the study guide while researching about the agenda, and ensure that you are thorough with your portfolios' stance about the same, and various sub-topics thoroughly.
2. Ensure that all sources of information you use in your speeches are reliable, and accepted in MUNs. The executive board and/or other delegates may ask for a source, with regard to a piece of information that you provide. Some reliable sources include UN affiliated websites, BBC, The World Bank. (Don't limit yourself to just these!)
3. Read relevant resolutions, such as Agenda 21, and The Paris Agreement. They can be extremely informative, and would be of great help during the conference.
4. Be prepared with at least 2 GSL's, and 4 moderated caucus speeches.