

THE WORK AND PRIORITIES OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION

- *Priorities and work of the World Health Organization (WHO)*

The World Health Organisation (WHO) is a branch of the United Nations. Its goal is to build a better and healthier future for all. The function of the WHO is to provide leadership in engaging and supporting all countries to respond to a range of global health issues to improve the health and wellbeing of all people.

THE WORK OF THE WHO

- Provide leadership and create partnerships to promote health and wellbeing – works with member states to develop policies and regulations to prevent and manage disease outbreaks.
- Conduct research and provide health and wellbeing information – ensure that most up-to-date research is available to inform decisions that promote health and wellbeing, provides expertise in research to improve the ways diseases are diagnosed and treated.
- Set norms and standards and promote and monitor their implementation – standardise the way research is carried out and to use common indicators for the collection of health data.
- Develop policies to help countries take action to promote health and wellbeing – policies help governments and the global community implement strategies known to be effective in bringing about improvements in health and wellbeing. WHO helps countries adapt policies to meet their specific needs.
- Provide technical support and help build sustainable health systems – provides advice and support to countries to implement changes in the provision of universal healthcare, financing and a trained workforce. WHO helps strengthen a country's capacity for early warning risk reduction.
- Monitor health and wellbeing and assess health and wellbeing trends – works with governments and organisations (eg. World Bank) to collect data related to health and wellbeing. This can be used to track incidence, prevalence and mortality of diseases.

PRIORITIES OF THE WHO

From VCAA:

** The World Health Organization has ratified the draft of the thirteenth general programme of work and it will guide the work of the WHO for 2019–2023.

From 2019, students undertaking VCE Health and Human Development (2018–2022) will study and be assessed against the priorities and work of the WHO thirteenth general programme of work.

This includes the key knowledge and skills of:

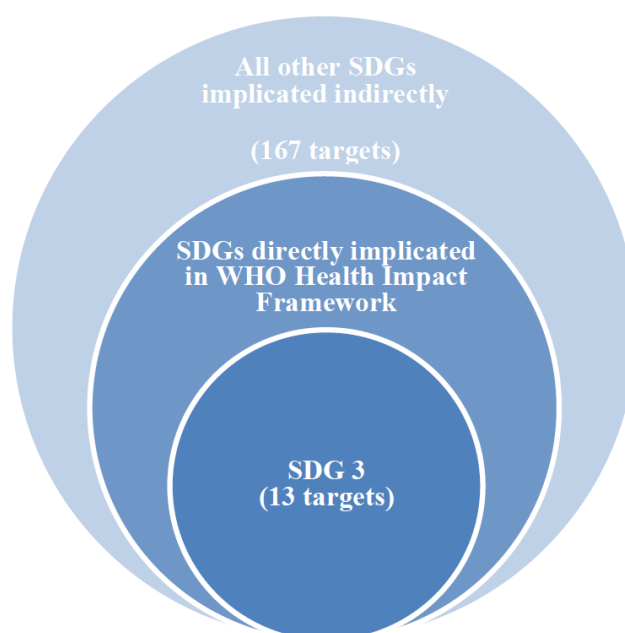
- *priorities and work of the WHO*
- *explain the priorities and the work of the WHO and discuss how the WHO priorities are reflected in different scenarios.*

WHO'S VISION AND MISSION

The thirteenth general programme of work, 2019–2023 (GPW 13) sets the strategic direction of the WHO for 2019–2023. It is based on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with a commitment to achieve Goal 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages) and is relevant to low, middle and high income countries.

GPW 13 provides a vision for *A world in which all people attain the highest possible standard of health and well-being* and summarises the WHO mission to *promote health; Keep the world safe; and serve the vulnerable.*

While SDG 3 is central to WHO's work, the work of the WHO is either directly implicated or indirectly influences or are influenced by all of the SDGs. The relationship between GPW 13 and the SDGs is shown in Figure 1.





PRIORITIES AND WORK OF THE WHO

The over-arching goal to ensure healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages is the foundation for the work of the WHO 2019–2023 which leads to three specific priorities (Figure 2):

- achieving universal health coverage
- addressing health emergencies
- promote healthier populations.

The priorities are interconnected as shown in Figure 3. For example, strengthening health systems also makes them more resilient and better able to detect and control outbreaks before they spread; and improved public health functions contribute to good-quality health care within universal health coverage (UHC) and the strong surveillance systems necessary for early disease detection and control.

Universal health coverage – 1 billion more people benefitting from universal health coverage

The WHO aims to progress toward UHC by addressing:

- Service access and quality
- Health workforce
- Access to medicines, vaccines and health products
- Governance and finance
- Health information systems
- Advocacy
- Country support.

Health emergencies – 1 billion more people better protected from health emergencies

The WHO aims to ensure that 1 billion people are better protected from health emergencies by:

- Building and sustaining resilient national, regional and global capacities required to keep the world safe from epidemics and other health emergencies; and
- Ensuring that populations affected by acute and protracted emergencies have rapid access to essential life-saving health services including health promotion and disease prevention.

Healthier populations – 1 billion more people enjoying better health and well-being

- The WHO will contribute to people enjoying better health and well-being through five platforms:
- Improving human capital across the life course.
- Accelerating action on preventing noncommunicable diseases and promoting mental health.
- Accelerating elimination and eradication of high impact communicable diseases.
- Tackling antimicrobial resistance.
- Addressing health effects of climate change in small island developing states and other vulnerable states.

** For the purposes of VCE Health and Human Development (2018–2022) it is expected that students should be able to:

- identify and explain the strategic priorities and work of the WHO
- describe how the work of the WHO contributes to achieving SDG 3
- discuss how the WHO priorities are reflected in difference scenarios.