



World Health Organization

Developing Equitable Vaccine Distribution Methods

Bangalore Junior Model United Nations 2021

Table of Contents

Message from the Bureau

Introduction to the World Health Organization

Importance of Equitable Vaccine Distribution

Global Inequality with regards to Vaccine Distribution

Introduction to the COVID-19 Pandemic

COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

Suggestions for Further Research

QARMAs

Position Papers

Glossary/Important Terms

Bibliography and Links for Further Research

Message From The Bureau

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the World Health Organization! We are so excited to have you here and can't wait to hear your thoughts on our agenda. We are looking forward to stimulating debate and hearing your new ideas, but most importantly, having fun. We hope that regardless of your MUN experience, we see maximum participation from all of you and you leave this conference with a fresh prospect. Throughout the conference, we encourage you to learn as much as you can, put forward thought-provoking points and reach consensus (no pressure).

We understand how intimidating MUNs can be, so this guide is here to give you a starting point for your research on this year's agenda: 'Developing Equitable Vaccine Distribution Methods.' It includes everything you need to provide direction to your research. However, make sure to do thorough research of your own before the conference.

This year, the WHO Executive Board members are Simran Kaur (Chair), Rakshita Sivakumar (Vice-Chair) and Kashvi Srinivasan (Moderator). We all have previous MUN experience and are passionate about global health. Considering that we've all been delegates before and know how difficult MUNs can be, we will try our best to make your MUN experience enjoyable and intriguing. We can't wait to engage with you and hear your outlook on the agenda. Remember to try your best and have fun!

If you have any questions please email us at bangalorejmun@oakridge.in with the subject line: "WHO_Queries" or visit the website at <https://bangalorejmun.in/>.

Sincerely,

The Executive Bureau members of the World Health Organization

Simran Kaur: Chair
Rakshita Sivakumar: Vice-chair
Kashvi Srinivasan: Moderator

Introduction to the World Health Organization

The World Health Organization (WHO) is an international agency that was founded in 1948, which assesses international health issues with 194 countries. This organization has built its foundations globally over the past 73 years. For example, the Declaration on Primary Health-Care in 1978, that highlights the commitment of health-care for all. This was also revised in 2018, to emphasize the critical role played by primary health-care across the globe. Furthermore, the WHO is responsible for the International Health Regulations. This committee also outlines the rights and guidelines for health emergencies and concerns. These regulations consist of the criteria that determine a certain health crisis as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern* (PHEIC). This was used as a basis for declaring the COVID-19 Pandemic as a global health emergency. The WHO constitution states that it is a citizen's fundamental right to the "highest attainable standard of health" without discrimination of any kind.

*(Refer to the Glossary for more information)

Importance of Equitable Vaccine Distribution

Vaccines* have been responsible for the eradication of numerous disease outbreaks in the past, and will continue to play a major role in the future of global health. Vaccines are substances used to provide immunity against diseases. They have proven effective in numerous circumstances and will certainly continue to do so, with their positive effect on global health.

There are nearly 8 billion people living in this world and 195 countries. Every individual needs to be vaccinated against certain diseases, but there are guaranteed struggles and drawbacks that are faced with every vaccine. Contagious infections can be spread easily among people and the spread of these infections will only continue to increase until people are vaccinated. Taking into consideration the current COVID-19 pandemic, over 95% of recorded cases are of unvaccinated individuals. This emphasizes the effectiveness of vaccines and justifies the numerous efforts taken by countries and the world to get more people vaccinated.

However, due to numerous reasons, some countries have a much higher percentage of their population vaccinated against various diseases. Countries that are unable to acquire an adequate supply of vaccines have to depend on others to import the vaccines to them. Other organizations also play a part in ensuring equitable vaccine distribution. Inequitable vaccine distribution contributes to inequality because it brings out the glaring differences between countries when global health is something that needs to be a worldly matter rather than a matter of individual countries. It puts individuals living in certain countries at a disadvantage, and when it comes to health, no one's health is more important than another's.

*(Refer to the Glossary for more information)

Global Inequality With Regards to Vaccine Distribution

There has been a history of prejudice* and inequality regarding vaccine distribution globally, primarily against minorities*. Historically, most vaccines are first provided to rich and more economically developed countries, and it takes a long period of time before the vaccines reach the poorer, less economically developed countries. An example of this is the distribution of the Polio vaccine. The vaccine was developed and approved in the 1960s, and polio was eradicated in most of the more economically developed countries. However, some less economically developed countries are still suffering from the disease.

The same situation can be observed in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and its vaccine distribution. “Vaccine equity is the challenge of our time,” Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) said. Out of the 832 million vaccine doses administered, only a bare 0.2 % of these doses have been administered to lower income countries. 1 in 4 people in higher income countries have received their vaccination doses, while only 1 in 500 people have received their vaccination in lower- income countries. These contrasting statistics perfectly demonstrate global inequality when it comes to vaccine distribution worldwide. How can nations work collectively to resolve this concerning issue, and together advance a system of equitable distribution of vaccines that is timeless?

*(Refer to the Glossary for more information)

Introduction to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Considering the agenda for the WHO this year, the COVID-19 pandemic becomes a significant topic to be explored in this committee. COVID-19 is a communicable* virus caused by the SARS-coV-2 virus. The average person infected with COVID-19 will experience minor respiratory issues and can recover without any particular treatment. However, elder people and people with existing medical conditions are more susceptible to serious infection.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 virus has caused havoc, disrupted our daily lives, and has set unprecedented* circumstances. The pandemic has not only affected public health, but also the global economy, mental health, and everyday lifestyles. Lockdowns, isolations, restrictions on travelling, and previous normal activities have caused damaging effects. However, the situation has improved to a great extent..

The development of approved vaccines has resulted in an overall reduction of COVID-19 cases, and even a recommence into normal lifestyle. Restrictions have eased, schools and businesses have reopened offline, and people are able to foresee an optimistic future. Yes, vaccination campaigns and progress worldwide has reconnected most of us to reality, and improved public health conditions massively. But, it is important to remember that there are still prioritization issues in the way vaccines are being administered. How can it be ensured that everybody is able to receive the vaccine in ethically* consistent and equitable* manners?

*(Refer to the Glossary for more information)

COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

By hopefully nearing the end of the COVID-19 Pandemic, vaccine distribution and vaccination drives have been foregrounded. The Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) is an advisory group that works closely with the WHO for immunization. Working together alongside the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and Gavi, a global health partnership with an ultimate goal of immunization for all, the WHO has also created the COVAX facility. This facility works towards quicker manufacturing and equitable distribution of vaccines across the globe, without any regard to economies or fragility. COVAX is working with a global partnership, known as the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT) for this specific goal.

Gavi, while co-leading the COVAX facility, has worked on several projects and policies striving toward the guarantee of equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. An example of one such policy is the “Fragility, Emergencies and Refugees” policy, which outlines the fact that additional aid may be provided for certain countries and their specific needs, whether it be strategic, administrative or financial. Gavi has also created the COVAX AMC (COVID-19 Vaccines Advance Market Commitment) to ensure access to COVID-19 vaccines for low and middle income countries as well as other countries suffering from fragility*.

*(Refer to the Glossary for more information)

Suggestions for Further Research

1. How has COVID-19 affected minorities?
2. What have been some of the global inequalities with regards to vaccination distribution?
3. How does the political and environmental climate of a country affect its vaccination campaign?
4. What is COVAX?
 - a. How is it relevant to equitable vaccine distribution?
5. How does your country get their vaccine supply (from pharmaceutical companies/other countries, etc)?
 - a. How can your country ensure equitable vaccine distribution, keeping in mind its guidelines?
6. How can countries manage limited supply of vaccines, and ensure that all citizens receive vaccinations in the near future?
7. What role do more economically developed countries play in delivering vaccines to the rest of the world?
8. How does your country conduct vaccine trials?
 - a. How do they ensure that this process is ethical?
9. How can countries that are reliant on foreign manufacturers/firms and governments make sure that its entire population is able to access the vaccine?
 - a. How can these countries work together to form an effective vaccine trade system?

QARMAs (Questions a Resolution must answer)

1. How will the mass distribution of vaccines be prioritized amongst different communities?
 - a. What should be the criteria for prioritization?
2. How can countries with a high vaccine supply support those with a lower vaccine supply?
3. What frameworks can be implemented for the illegal trade of vaccines?
 - a. How can we avoid exploitation of vaccine manufacturers and firms?
4. How can countries suffering from fragility ensure equitable distribution of vaccines?
 - a. How can more stable countries provide aid to these countries?
5. What global efforts can be taken to ensure ethical vaccine trials?
 - a. How would this affect the production and distribution of vaccines?

Position Papers

A position paper is your country's stance on the agenda and what you, as a delegate, intend to do about it. Writing a position paper is an excellent way to streamline your understanding of a given topic and pinpoint main ideas that you want to bring up in committee. A position paper is usually divided into 4 sections:

1. General Information

1st Paragraph - Opening Statement (3 - 4 sentences)

Why is this topic important for the committee to address?

Why does your country care about this topic?

What is your country's policy on this topic?

2. Specifics

2nd Paragraph - National Actions (3 - 5 sentences)

Is the topic an issue in your country?

What actions has your country taken to improve or address the issue on a national level?

3rd Paragraph - International Actions (3 - 5 sentences)

How has your country improved or addressed the issues on an international level?

What actions has your country taken on the issues on an international level?

What conventions, treaties and resolutions has your country supported on this issue?

What organizations is your country a member of that addresses this issue?

Can you reference government officials on this issue?

4th Paragraph - Recommendations for Action (4 - 6 sentences)

What role would your country like to see the international community take to address the problem?

What are your country's recommendations to the committee on how to best resolve the issue?

Tips

Research, Research, Research

DO NOT restate information found in the topic guide

DO NOT just list facts

DO NOT plagiarize
DO NOT include information about your country that is not related to the issue.
Give recommendations on issue specifics

The final, and most substantial section of your position paper should create the foundation for your participation in the committee. First, it should detail your nation's general policy on the key points of contention presented in this background guide. Then, the most important part of your position paper is the presentation of your original proposals for how to solve the issues at hand. These should be presented as specific solutions geared towards the nuances of the topic of the position paper.

Note that the position paper should not be more than 1 page long. The formatting should be as follows: Font-Times New Roman and Font-12p

An important point to remember is that a position paper is a formal document and not your own personal opinion. Make sure to take your country's viewpoints and foreign policy into account while creating the position paper.

Glossary/Important terms

1. **Equitable:** Fair and impartial.
2. **Vaccine:** a biological substance that is administered to stimulate the body's immune response against an infectious disease.
3. **Health regulations:** a rule issued by a regulatory agency on licensure of healthcare professionals.
4. **Approved vaccines:** when a vaccine has gone through the standard review process and has been determined as a safe and effective vaccine for preventing the particular infection.
5. **Communicable:** transmittable.
6. **Ethics:** a theory or system of moral values.
7. **Minorities:** a relatively smaller part of the population different from others is various characteristics, and people who are often subjected to different and discriminatory treatment
8. **Political climate:** the mood and opinions of a political society at a particular time period.
9. **Public Health Emergency of International Concern:** formal declaration by the WHO of an event that is determined to constitute a public health risk to other states, through the international spread of disease, and to potentially require a cooperated international response.
10. **Fragility:** when a country has a weak capacity to carry out basic governance functions and the ability to develop relations with society.
11. **Prejudice:** preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience.
12. **Unprecedented:** never done or known before.

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