



**PRESS RELEASE - Thursday 22 September 2022**

## **The WHO Foundation launches NEW Health Emergencies Alliance for businesses around the world**

- The WHO Foundation is calling on partners to join their Health Emergencies Alliance to support in financing the response to health emergencies
- Partners are invited to join this membership community which will provide resources for the World Health Organization (WHO) to respond to disasters and emergencies effectively and swiftly
- Foundation S - The Sanofi Collective and Benevity join the new alliance as partners

**New York/Geneva, 22 September 2022:** The WHO Foundation announced at Goals House yesterday the Health Emergencies Alliance - a new initiative with businesses and philanthropists to support WHO's global emergency response.

Conflict, the climate crisis, COVID-19 and spiking food and energy prices are all intertwining crises. These events have enormous impacts on health, leaving millions of people needing access to urgent lifesaving healthcare. Without adequate support, these demands add more pressure and can lead to the collapse of health systems, sparking even greater health emergencies. When crises break, responses should be rapid and well-coordinated, regardless of their location.

According to OCHA,<sup>1</sup> 274 million people will need humanitarian assistance and protection. This number is a significant increase from 235 million people a year ago, which was already the highest figure in decades. The world must prepare for large-scale health emergencies, diseases, conflicts, and other humanitarian situations by powering the work of WHO, serving as both a first responder and a provider of last resort care for the world's most vulnerable people.

To address these needs, the WHO Foundation has launched the **Health Emergencies Alliance**, a novel membership community designed to lead the way to a healthier and more equitable future. By committing to support the program for a three-year period, partners can play a key role in providing predictable and reliable funding for unpredictable health emergencies supporting WHO's Global Health Emergency Appeal, aiming to provide humanitarian assistance to 160 million people across 56 countries in 2022 alone.

Announcing the new Alliance, Anil Soni, Chief Executive Officer of the WHO Foundation, said: "Collective effort is vital in ensuring the world is prepared to face the immense health challenges that emergencies bring. We have seen that funding is not always available to power responses equally. We want to ensure that every emergency gets the same level of support in every part of the world, as healthcare never stops, whatever the crisis, whether it be tackling diseases outbreaks like Ebola or Monkeypox, flooding in Pakistan, food crises in the Sahel and Horn of Africa, or the conflicts in Syria or Ukraine.

"I urge businesses and organizations to come forward to partner in the Health Emergencies Alliance with the WHO Foundation in building a healthier future and strengthening health care capacity around the world."

As the COVID-19 pandemic has shown, healthier, more resilient countries can respond more effectively to health emergencies. Essential health services must be available to all, because if not, disease spreads along the fault lines of inequality.

Speaking at the Goals House event, Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Africa Regional Director, urged the need to support the Horn of Africa and the Sahel: "Millions of people are being forced to the brink of starvation and into extremely difficult and dangerous circumstances. Emergency health services have been severely impaired by chronically low funding. We need

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<sup>1</sup> <https://gho.unocha.org/>



to sustain humanitarian assistance and ensure that these emergencies do not slip off the world's attention."

The Foundation is calling on businesses and philanthropists to join the WHO Foundation Health Emergency Alliance. Partners will be at the forefront of enabling WHO's swift and effective response to crises around the world. A commitment to providing a predictable stream of flexible funding is critical to WHO's ability to continue to readily respond to emergencies. WHO's unique global reach, technical expertise, and broad range of partnerships allows it to respond rapidly and at scale, moving people, resources, and supplies to where they are needed the most during health emergencies.

Foundation S, the new philanthropic engine of SANOFI, and Benevity have already joined the Health Emergency Alliance to help power WHO's emergency responses.

Vanina Laurent-Ledru, Director General of Foundation S said of joining the WHO Foundation's Health Emergency Alliance, "Foundation S is working to amplify innovation and collaboration around two key areas: increasing health resilience of populations affected by climate change and improving health emergency preparedness for people to have life-saving healthcare when disasters strike. We are proud to join the WHO Foundation's Health Emergency Alliance as we are eager to support WHO's rapid response when and where people need it most."

Sona Khosla, Chief Impact Officer of Benevity, said: "We are seeing more disasters strike and at rapid speed. The WHO Foundation's Health Emergencies Alliance is a great opportunity for businesses, their employees, and customers, to make an impact that reaches people in the heart of communities in times of crisis. Benevity is delighted to be an Alliance partner to enable WHO's responses to provide healthcare, whenever and wherever the emergency."

The Health Emergency Alliance launches at a crucial time, with people in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa experiencing extreme hunger, the Ukraine crisis still destroying health systems and claiming lives, and future pandemics on the horizon.

Building a healthier future for people around the world demands coordinated efforts on a scale never seen before. The WHO Foundation aims to bring together the power of the private sector with the reach of the WHO to drive innovation, impact, and a greater return on investment. Together with partners, the Foundation will invest in opportunities that promote health, improve health systems, and respond to health emergencies. All with the aim of strengthening health care capacity around the world to tackle the health challenges of today and tomorrow.

Visit [www.who.foundation](http://www.who.foundation) or contact [d.nelson@who.foundation](mailto:d.nelson@who.foundation) to find out more information about the Health Emergencies Alliance.

**ENDS**

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**Notes to editors**

**WHO is the first emergency health responder**



WHO's unique global reach, technical expertise, and broad range of partnerships allow it to respond rapidly and at scale, moving people, resources, and supplies to where they are needed the most during health emergencies. WHO, along with other health partners, ensures prevention, preparedness, readiness, response, and recovery in emergency situations.

### Since March 2022, WHO has responded to multiple emergencies around the world

- **Ebola outbreak in Uganda:** WHO is helping Ugandan health authorities with the investigation, is deploying staff to the affected area and has dispatched supplies to support the care of patients.
- **Pakistan Floods:** More than 75.5 million people have been displaced by catastrophic monsoon flooding, WHO has initiated an immediate response to treat the injured, provide life-saving supplies to health facilities, support mobile health teams, and prevent the spread of infectious disease.
- **Monkeypox:** just under 24,000 cases of laboratory-confirmed monkeypox had been identified from 43 countries in the WHO European region (WHO, Sept 13). WHO is issuing guidance to countries on surveillance as well as risk communication information and bolstering laboratory diagnosis and disease surveillance in the African region.
- **Afghanistan:** more than half the population is in need, with widespread malnutrition and a surge in measles, among many other challenges. WHO is preparing a house-to-house vaccination campaign for measles, polio and COVID-19. Despite many donors having withdrawn health funding, WHO continues to use its resources to provide health services, medical supplies, disease outbreak response for the population of Afghanistan as well as an extensive trauma programme that includes training, supplies and equipment for 130 hospitals and 67 blood banks.
- **Ethiopia:** an estimated 20 million people need humanitarian aid. From its regional hub, WHO is coordinating vaccination campaigns, medical supplies, and emergency health teams, as well as technical and logistical input to help vaccinate half a million under 10s in the Oromia region against measles.
- **Yemen:** where roughly two-thirds of the population, more than 20 million people, are estimated to need health assistance. WHO is supporting the strengthening of health systems, has set up 109 therapeutic feeding centers and 26 emergency operations centers.
- **Ukraine:** More than 17 million people need emergency aid and 7 million people have left the country. WHO is delivering specialized medical supplies, coordinating the deployment of medical teams, and working with health authorities to minimize disruptions to the delivery of critical healthcare services within Ukraine and in countries hosting refugees.

### What is the WHO Foundation?

Established in 2020 as an independent entity, the WHO Foundation complements and strengthens the work of WHO and its global network of partners by mobilising new funding from diverse sources—including philanthropists, corporate entities, and the public—to power WHO's mission. By addressing the world's most urgent health issues in a new, transformative, catalytic way, the WHO Foundation aims to provide everyone, everywhere, a healthier, more equitable future.