The Guardian of Public Health in India
WHO at a glance

194 Member States

- Headquarters in Geneva
- 6 Regional Offices
- More than 150 country offices
- More than 7000 staff
- More than 700 institutions support WHO’s work
- Close partnerships with UN agencies, donors, foundations, academia, non-governmental organizations and the private sector

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General in Madagascar

WHO team on the ground
Our work

The World Health Organization (WHO) aims to build a better and healthier future for people all over the world. WHO Secretariat staff work with the governments and other partners to ensure the highest attainable level of health for all.

Together we strive to combat communicable diseases such as influenza and tuberculosis (TB), and noncommunicable illnesses such as cancer and heart diseases. We help mothers and children survive and thrive, so they can look forward to a healthy life. We ensure the safety of the air people breathe, the food they eat, the water they drink – and the medicines and vaccines they need.

We help countries prepare for emergencies. Underpinning all we do is a shared effort to build strong health systems and achieve universal health coverage (UHC).

WHO keeps a close eye on health trends, looking out for new threats and for new opportunities to improve public health. We bring together the world's top experts to examine critical health issues, define the best solutions, and deliver and implement the strongest recommendations.

At WHO, we believe none should miss out on the opportunity to live a healthy life.

WHO has the following six core functions:

- Providing leadership on matters critical to health and engaging in partnerships where joint action is needed;
- Shaping the research agenda and stimulating the generation, translation and dissemination of valuable knowledge;
- Setting norms and standards and promoting and monitoring their implementation;
- Articulating ethical and evidence-based policy options;
- Providing technical support, catalysing change, and building sustainable institutional capacity;
- Monitoring the health situation and assessing health trends.
Healthier WHO South-East Asia Region

Articulating her vision, Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh, WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia Region, has proposed an ambitious “1 by 4” plan. The 1 refers to a more responsive WHO in the Region and the 4 refers to the 4 strategic areas:

1. Addressing the persisting and emerging epidemiological and demographic challenges
2. Advancing UHC and robust health systems
3. Strengthening emergency risk management for sustainable development
4. Articulating a strong Regional voice in the global health agenda

Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh, WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia Region on a visit to a hospital in Maldives
WHO in India

- India became a party to the WHO Constitution on 12 January 1948
- India is a Member State of the WHO South-East Asia Region
- The WHO Country Office for India is headquartered in New Delhi with a strength of around 100 personnel. There are over 270 field offices of WHO National Polio Surveillance Project (NPSP) with more than 1700 personnel, around 80 TB consultants and 12 State and Zonal coordinators for Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs)
WHO Country Office for India

What we do?

Our work at the country-level is guided by the Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS), the National Health Policy 2017, the WHO Global Programme of Work (GPW) and the WHO Regional Flagship Priorities. The collaborative work of WHO India is implemented through five technical categories: communicable diseases, noncommunicable diseases (NCDs); health emergency programme; health system strengthening; and reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health.

Where we work?

The uniqueness of WHO’s support to the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) is its large on-the-ground presence through the National Public Health Surveillance Project—the erstwhile National Polio Surveillance Project—to support the control of polio and other infectious diseases and now the broader public health needs; the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme technical support network; and the State and zonal coordinators for NTDs. To respond to the growing burden of NCD's WHO India will soon have a network of technical consultants as a part of the India Hypertension Management Initiative.

Who we work with?

To support the government’s health programmes and initiatives, both at the central and state levels, WHO India works with the MoHFW and other concerned entities such as the NITI Aayog (formerly Planning Commission) and ministries—Women and Child Development, Finance, Chemicals and Fertilizers, Road Transport and Highways, Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Environment Forest and Climate Change, Drinking Water and Sanitation, along with academic institutions, non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations.
Historic landmarks

1977
Eradication of smallpox

2014
Triumph over polio

2015
Elimination of maternal and neonatal tetanus

2016
Elimination of YAWS
WHO Country Office for India

Our priorities

The WHO Country Office for India’s areas of work are enshrined in its Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS), WHO Global Programme of Work and workplans, developed in consultation with MoHFW.

Jointly developed by the MoHFW and WHO India, the WHO Country Cooperation Strategy - India aims at improving health and equity in India. It addresses both, the challenges to unleashing India’s potential globally and solving long-standing health and health service delivery problems internally.

WHO’s work in India is aligned to the strategic priorities of the draft 13th GPW 2019-2023:

- 1 billion more people enjoying better health and well-being
- 1 billion more people better protected from health emergencies
- 1 billion more people benefitting from universal health coverage

Staying active through yoga
Our priorities

To contribute meaningfully to the government's health agenda, the draft CCS 2018-2023 has so far identified five strategic priorities to achieve the national targets under the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Strategic priority 1**
Advance UHC and SDGs agenda through improved health service delivery, financial protection, population coverage and address social determinants of health

**Strategic priority 2**
Respond to the challenge of NCDs, including mental health and road traffic injuries, and mitigate health impacts of environmental risks

**Strategic priority 3**
End epidemics of key communicable diseases and accelerate reduction of maternal and newborn deaths

**Strategic priority 4**
Enhance systems strengthening to address global health security threats

**Strategic priority 5**
Advance India's leadership in health globally by leveraging its strengths in medical products, services and innovations in health
Transition

Polio to public health

Over seven years ago, India reported its last case of polio, leading to the South-East Region of WHO being certified polio free on 27 March 2014. The WHO National Polio Surveillance Project, along with other partner organizations, played a critical role in making this monumental public health accomplishment possible.

WHO has worked tirelessly to maintain India's polio-free status, while gradually transferring knowledge, lessons learned and assets to routine immunization and other immunization programme activities and select priority public health programmes, Intensified Mission Indradhanush and Measles-Rubella campaign; control of other vaccine-preventable diseases, including surveillance; Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme and supporting efforts to eliminate NTDs such as kala-azar, leprosy and lymphatic filariasis for broader public health impact.
The renewed emphasis by the government on strengthening health systems and advancing UHC and the strong endorsement of the SDGs offer an unprecedented opportunity to position health at the centre of economic growth.
Health policy landscape

The main objective of the National Health Policy 2017 is to achieve the highest possible level of good health and well-being through a preventive and promotive health care orientation in all developmental policies, and to achieve universal access to good quality health care services without anyone having to face financial hardship as a consequence.

The twin initiatives of the government announced in the union budget 2018-19 augur well for the country: the National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS), covering 500 million people up to INR 500 000 for secondary and tertiary care, provides financial protection, and the upgradation of 150 000 sub-centres to Health and Wellness Centres brings health services closer to people.

WHO India is committed to supporting the government in its endeavours to make its people healthier.