

CENTRAL TOPICS 2021

Vaccine Equity: A Call to Action

Equal access for all to a COVID-19 vaccine has been a dominant political demand throughout the pandemic. How far have we advanced sharing the vaccine equitably and ensuring that it is considered a global public good? What political lessons have we learned also for other areas of global health? What instruments can help ensure global public goods for health?

The Role of the European Union in Global Health

The initiatives to create a European Health Union entail an important political opportunity to strengthen the global health role of the EU. The EU's internal legal and political capacity for health immediately interacts with its goals in global health. A stronger global health role of the EU will bring geopolitical advantages, but will also benefit the global community as well as EU Member States internally. It affects many areas of EU policy including development policies, foreign policies and setting safety standards that impact global health, in areas such as food safety, chemical safety, environmental policies and more recently digital health.

WHO Council on the Economics of Health for All

Global Health needs new economic thinking—a proactive Health for All economic agenda, to shape our economies so they truly have wellbeing and inclusion at the center of how we create value, measure it and distribute it. Returning to the status quo following the pandemic will not be enough—WHO calls for innovation-led transformation of health systems to achieve economic wellbeing everywhere. We must rethink how we value health. The time has come for a new narrative that sees health not as a cost, but an investment that is the foundation of productive, resilient and stable economies.

The Intersection of COVID-19 and Mental Health

Mental health problems affect us all. The massive unmet need for care, the abuses of fundamental rights of people with mental health problems, and the very low investment in mental health care nationally and through development assistance, are unacceptable, especially during this pandemic. Quite simply, mental health is the orphan child of the health care system and all countries are developing when it comes to mental health. No country will achieve the aspirations of Universal Health Coverage and an effective Health in All Policies approach to the pandemic without addressing mental health, for health care cannot be universal without mental health.

Unlocking Digital and AI Technologies for Health

Artificial intelligence has led to improvements in areas of healthcare such as medical imaging, automated clinical decision-making, diagnosis, prognosis, and more. Although AI possesses the capability to revolutionize several fields of medicine, it must be bound by ethical and regulatory approaches that ensure patient's rights.

Pandemic Preparedness: Lessons from COVID-19

The global response to COVID-19 has called our global pandemic preparedness into question. Now we must build with urgency on experiences made. New forms of collaboration and strengthened partnerships have emerged as central to the response. We have seen unprecedented speed to develop the tests, treatments and vaccines needed to keep the world safe. But the question remains; from science and research to policy and implementation, has the world truly shifted in terms of our ability to react? How can we build towards the future after COVID-19, and ensure preparedness for the challenges to come.

POLICY TRACK

Hosted by the Federal Ministry of Health

The Policy Track brings together leading experts from science, think tanks, politics, and civil society to exchange ideas and discuss viewpoints on the most current global health issues regarding global health governance.

By facilitating open, controversial, in-depth debates, the Policy Track comprises compelling and engaging sessions that will allow for a deeper understanding of various perspectives and the unfolding of further insights for policymaking around the most current global health challenges.

The Policy Track includes sessions on the following current topics:

- The One Health approach to global health
- Reforms in the Global Health architecture
- New forms of governance in global health
- Forgotten epidemics: AIDS & Mental Health in light of COVID-19

By providing a forum to facilitate discussions around such topics, the German Ministry of Health aims to bring the most relevant topics of global health to Germany to further facilitate the discussion with leading experts and incorporate the gained knowledge in ongoing and upcoming policy processes.