

Impact Update

2025



John Kismir (right), from WHO talks with community health promoters in Samburu County, Kenya.

Letter from the CEO



Thank you for your support to the World Health Organization (WHO). Every gift helped WHO save lives in 2025 and enables WHO to maintain its life-saving work in 2026.

The breadth and depth of what WHO does when emergencies strike have always inspired me. Last year, its work was even more awe-inspiring, as WHO colleagues worked despite the headwinds of deep cuts to global health funding by the United States and other governments. In Afghanistan alone, more than 400 health facilities were forced to close due to aid shortfalls. It is estimated that the cuts resulted in 750,000 deaths in a single year, most of them children.

Those cuts did not stop WHO from doing what it was designed to do – be first-in and last-out for health emergencies, coordinate the emergency response activities of international organizations, and enable national governments and proximate partners to lead the way.

What does that look like in practice? In 2025, WHO teams responded to health emergencies in 79 countries, deploying medical teams and ensuring the delivery of services to people in need. In Sudan, where conflict has killed tens of thousands and displaced millions of people, WHO-supported vaccination drives provided millions of vulnerable children and adults with protection against cholera. Across 11 countries in Africa, more than 1 million people were vaccinated for mpox, allowing WHO to declare the end of that health emergency in September.

The numbers are impressive, and behind every statistic lies a personal story: a baby who survived thanks to emergency neonatal care; a young person in distress comforted by a mental health worker; a mother fast-tracked for vaccination during an Ebola outbreak; a senior caught in a conflict zone, supplied with medication to treat his heart disease.

These are the people whose lives were touched – or saved – by your gift.

“

We are grateful for your belief in WHO's mission. Your generosity helps WHO reach people in crisis, deliver essential care, and prevent and contain outbreaks. Together, you and WHO bring hope to communities facing the toughest circumstances.

”

Thank you for standing with us. We are forever grateful.

Yours with gratitude,

Anil Soni
Chief Executive Officer
WHO Foundation



World Health Emergencies

The World Health Organization leads the global health response in emergencies.

Leads



Sets health standards, coordinates response to disease outbreaks, and protects health workers.



In health emergencies it often acts as first responder and “provider of last resort” – ensuring healthcare in a post-crisis situation after other humanitarian agencies have withdrawn.

Responds



Is on the ground in more than 150 countries.



Leads and coordinates all humanitarian health agencies.



Provides logistical support, delivers medicines and equipment, and coordinates emergency medical teams.

Strengthens



Trains and protects health workers
- raising the alarm when workers
and health facilities are attacked in
conflicts.



Oversees the world's public health
surveillance system, assessing health
risks and disease outbreaks, monitoring
early warning signals and mobilizing
responses.



Helps fund and provide expertise on
the modernization of services.

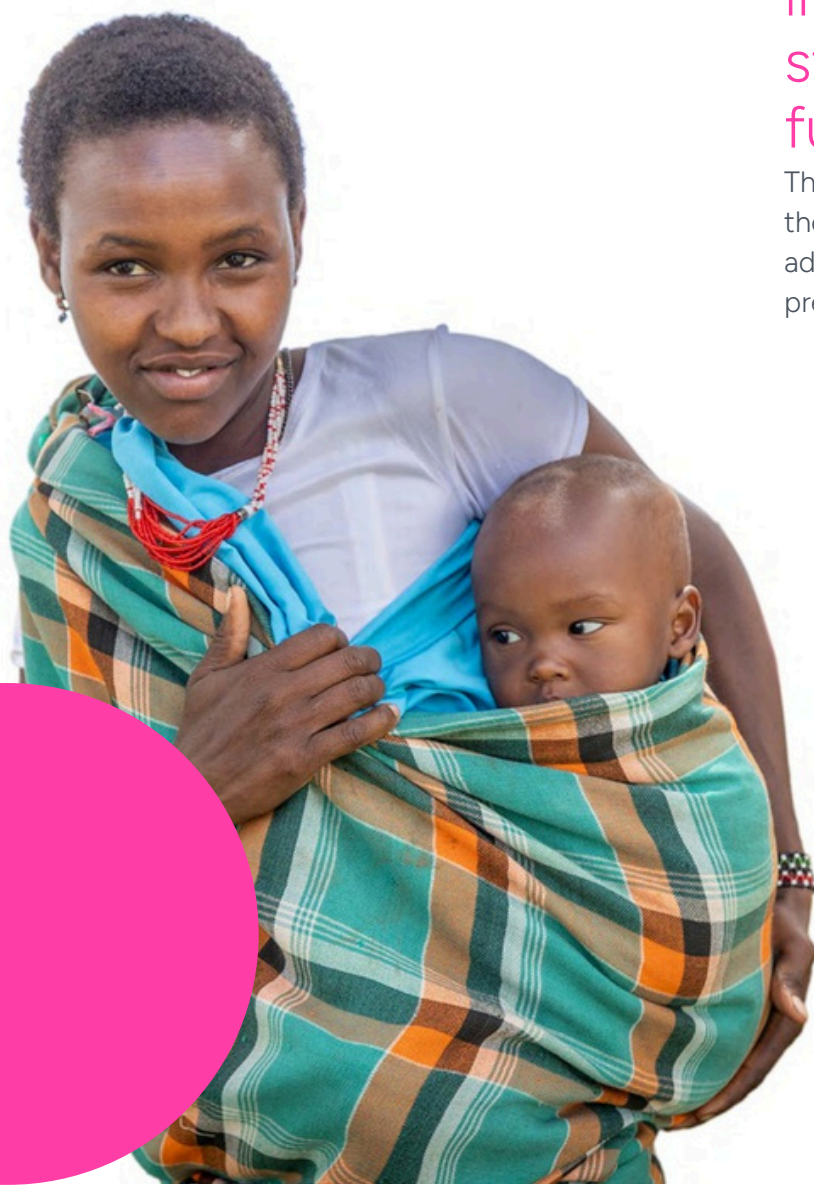


Advises, funds and guides ministries
of health to prepare for and mitigate
health emergencies.

WHO is guided by science, compassion and solidarity. But to carry out its mission, it needs your support. In 2025 the humanitarian sector grappled with deep cuts to funding. With an estimated two out of every three people in humanitarian crisis situations lacking healthcare, this funding makes an immediate difference to people's lives.

Every generous
donation you give,
every appeal you
share, every message
of solidarity you send
helps to make this
possible. Together, we
are proving that health
is not a privilege. It is an
investment in people,
stability and a healthier
future for all.

The following snapshots illustrate a selection of the range of emergencies your support helped address, from acute conflict to long-term disease prevention.



Namanu Lempano, displaced by conflict,
attended a WHO-supported mobile health clinic
in Sambaru, Kenya.



Impact at a glance

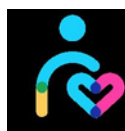
In 2025, WHO teams around the world



Responded to health emergencies in

79 countries

including helping mothers and newborns access safe care.



Supported mental healthcare in

40 health emergencies.



Evacuated thousands of children and adults from conflict zones for specialized medical treatment.



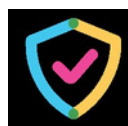
Led the global mpox response across 93 countries, supporting the rollout of

1 million

mpox vaccine doses in 11 African countries.



Aided countries to restore childhood vaccinations disrupted by emergencies, protecting them against measles, polio, diphtheria, and other life-threatening diseases.



Protected more than

38 million

people through yellow fever vaccination campaigns in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Niger and Uganda.



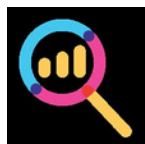
Monitored more than

1 million

disease 'signals' helping countries contain 450 separate disease threats with the potential to spread further.



Released its first global guidelines for meningitis diagnosis, treatment and care.



Helped swiftly contain Marburg virus disease in Ethiopia and an Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo through enhanced surveillance, laboratory testing, infection prevention and control, and contact tracing.

Conflict, Displacement and Disease

Prolonged conflict continues to drive severe and overlapping health emergencies.



Preparing for a medical evacuation at a field hospital in Gaza.



Immunizing health workers at risk of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Outbreaks Surge Among Violence

Violence, people being forced from their homes, and weakened health services make it easier for diseases to spread and for people to die from illnesses that could be prevented.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), disease levels in 2025 were among the worst in the world.

Cholera infected more than

61,000

people in 20 provinces and caused over 1,800 deaths.

Measles spread across the country, infecting more than

67,000

people and killing over 1,000, mostly children who were already malnourished.

Mpox investigations involved more than

83,000

suspected cases.

An Ebola outbreak in Kasai Province caused

64

cases and 45 deaths before it was brought under control.

Altogether, communicable diseases caused more than

450,000

reported cases and 8,700 deaths in 2025 alone.

Even with ongoing conflict and a lack of funding, the World Health Organization (WHO) helped stop the situation from getting worse. In the DRC, WHO-supported emergency teams and laboratories helped contain the Ebola outbreak in Bulapé, with no new cases reported after October 2025. In provinces affected by conflict, WHO delivered essential medicines and vaccines to health facilities, many of which had run out of supplies, and worked with partners to keep health care available for displaced people.

By responding quickly to outbreaks, supporting vaccinations, repairing health services, and coordinating partners, WHO helped save lives and stopped local outbreaks from turning into larger regional emergencies.

In 2025, WHO focused on the following actions:



Helped manage the response to more than 450,000 reported disease cases, including cholera, measles, mpox, Ebola, and polio.



Helped stop the Ebola outbreak in Bulapé, DRC, with no new cases reported after WHO led the response.



Delivered essential medicines, lab supplies, and vaccines to provinces affected by conflict, where most health facilities had run out of critical supplies.



Children taking part in the catch-up immunization campaign in Gaza.

Gaza

A Fragile Hope of Healthcare

For more than two years, conflict has pushed Gaza's health system close to collapse. Nearly 70,000 people have been killed, and more than 170,000 have been injured. Many of the injured will need long-term medical care. More than 1.7 million people have been forced from their homes and are living in crowded shelters with limited access to food, clean water, and health care.

More than half of essential medicines are no longer available. This includes many cancer drugs, medicines for mothers and children, dialysis supplies, and equipment needed for emergency and intensive care. At the same time, over 1 million people need mental health and emotional support.

Since the ceasefire in October, there have been small signs of improvement, despite violations by both sides. According to WHO, 27 health facilities have reopened, and work has begun to rebuild health services. However, the needs remain overwhelming. WHO estimates that tens of thousands of children, as well as pregnant and breastfeeding women, will need urgent nutrition support through 2026. In these difficult conditions, WHO continues to play a key role in keeping Gaza's health system functioning.

Despite enormous challenges, WHO continues to be a lifeline for Gaza's health system—helping save lives now while supporting recovery for the future.

WHO's response includes:



Delivering more than USD

90 million

worth of medical supplies to partners working in 32 health facilities.



Helping safely evacuate more than

8,000

patients from Gaza to receive specialized treatment abroad.



Providing over

17 million liters

of fuel to hospitals, ambulances, and partner organizations so critical services can continue.



Reaching at least

1.1 million

people with mental health support and training more than 1,000 health workers in mental and emotional care.



Treating more than

1,050

children with severe malnutrition in WHO-supported treatment centers.



Protecting at least

600,000

children under the age of ten from polio through three vaccination campaigns.



Tracking priority diseases at hundreds of sites to detect outbreaks early and respond quickly.



Coordinating more than 83 partner organizations to deliver life-saving health services at over

1,000

locations.



© WHO

WHO steps up its response to a dengue outbreak in Sudan.

Sudan and South Sudan Health Under Extreme Pressure

In Sudan and South Sudan, ongoing conflict, mass displacement, climate shocks, and disease outbreaks have created one of the world's most serious health emergencies. Years of fighting have forced millions of people from their homes, left large areas without health care, and put women and children at high risk from hunger, disease, and violence. About 8 out of every 10 health facilities are no longer working.

Routine vaccinations and disease monitoring have been badly disrupted. This has allowed diseases such as cholera, measles, malaria, dengue, and polio to spread quickly. At the same time, food shortages have made the situation worse. In 2025 alone, hundreds of thousands of children needed treatment for severe malnutrition.

In South Sudan, repeated outbreaks of cholera, measles, mpox, malaria, and vaccine-related polio have affected many communities. Flooding has destroyed health facilities and displaced families, while fighting and insecurity have made it hard for people to reach health care.

In both countries, the World Health Organization (WHO) has remained a key part of the health response. WHO has focused on keeping basic health services running, responding to disease outbreaks, restarting vaccinations, and reaching displaced and hard-to-reach communities with life-saving care.

WHO's response in 2025 included:



Supporting 60 primary health care centers in 10 states in Sudan, providing free essential care to more than

352,600

people, including over 49,000 children under five and more than 16,500 pregnant women.



Setting up cholera treatment centers and sending rapid response teams to outbreak areas in South Sudan.



Protecting children from preventable diseases by restoring routine vaccinations and running emergency vaccination campaigns in both countries.



Delivering more than

53 tons

of essential medical supplies to support frontline health services in Sudan.



Coordinating dozens of health partners in Sudan and South Sudan to deliver life-saving services in areas affected by conflict and flooding.



Helping treat over

448,000

children under five with severe malnutrition in Sudan between January and September 2025.



Strengthening disease tracking systems to detect outbreaks early and respond quickly across multiple states and counties.



Carrying out oral cholera vaccination campaigns in high-risk areas of South Sudan, delivering more than

910,000

doses and reaching over 90% of people in targeted areas.

Despite growing challenges, WHO's leadership and work on the ground continue to save lives, control disease outbreaks, and provide a vital lifeline to communities facing long-term crises.



Fares, 6, receives a routine medical check at Al-Bir NGO's clinic in Hama, Syria, a WHO-supported implementing partner. The clinic provides essential health services to children and families affected by years of conflict.

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Syrian Arab Republic Rebuilding After Catastrophe

After fourteen years of conflict, 16.5 million people in Syria need humanitarian help. In 2025 alone, more than 1.7 million people displaced inside the country returned to damaged towns and villages. Another 710,000 people returned from neighboring countries. These returns have put added pressure on an already fragile health system.

At the same time, Syria faced its worst drought in 36 years. This reduced access to clean water and increased the risk of diseases spread through contaminated water. Disease monitoring systems supported by WHO detected widespread outbreaks of diarrheal disease, measles, hepatitis, leishmaniasis, and flu-like illness.

In response, WHO helped keep disease tracking systems running across the country, supported routine vaccinations and outbreak responses, and repaired key health facilities. These actions helped restore access to health care for millions of people.

WHO's response in 2025 included:



Keeping disease monitoring and early warning systems running nationwide to quickly detect outbreaks such as measles, hepatitis, and diarrheal disease.



Supporting routine vaccinations and vaccination campaigns to protect children from measles, polio, and other preventable diseases.



Repairing and equipping hospitals and primary health care centers, restoring access to trauma care, kidney treatment, maternal health, and emergency services for millions of people.



Coordinating more than

170

health partners to deliver life-saving health services in highly insecure areas.



Vaccinating children against polio in Somalia with support from WHO.

Somalia

Preventing Outbreaks in a Protracted Crisis

Somalia is facing one of the most serious health emergencies in the world. Decades of conflict, climate shocks, displacement, and weak health services have left the country extremely vulnerable. In 2025, several disease outbreaks happened at the same time, including cholera, measles, diphtheria, malaria, dengue, and chikungunya. Thousands of people became sick, mostly unvaccinated children and people living in flood-affected areas. Ongoing insecurity forced some health facilities to close and delayed the delivery of vital medical supplies.

In 2025, WHO supported disease monitoring, rapid outbreak response, recovery of vaccination services, and the delivery of essential medicines. WHO also coordinated more than 60 health partners to keep life-saving health services running.

These efforts show WHO's vital role in stopping disease outbreaks from turning into major humanitarian disasters, even in one of the world's most difficult operating environments.

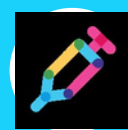
WHO's response in Somalia includes:



Supporting early detection and treatment of cholera in affected areas, helping keep deaths very low—fewer than 1 death for every 1,000 people infected.



Strengthening monitoring and response for measles, diphtheria, and polio in conflict-affected and hard-to-reach areas.



Helping restart routine vaccinations and running targeted campaigns to reach unvaccinated children under five.



Deploying rapid response teams to investigate and respond to disease outbreaks within two to three days of alerts.



Stockpiling and distributing essential medicines, tests, and outbreak supplies through WHO-managed regional warehouses.



Coordinating more than **60** healthpartners to maintain life-saving services, even as many organizations reduced their operations.



WHO supports health operations in Ukraine with equipment and expertise.

© WHO

Ukraine

Safeguarding Health Services

In 2025, Ukraine's health system remained under constant strain. Ongoing attacks damaged hospitals and clinics, killed hundreds of health workers, and injured thousands more. Millions of people were displaced or struggled to safely reach health care, especially in frontline and hard-to-reach areas. Older people, people with disabilities, and those with long-term illnesses were most at risk. Harsh winter conditions made power, heating, and water shortages even more dangerous.

Working with the Ministry of Health and humanitarian partners, WHO focused on keeping essential health services running, protecting health facilities during winter, supporting medical evacuations, and strengthening care in the hardest-hit areas.

Despite the long-running conflict, WHO continues to play a vital role in keeping Ukraine's health system functioning, protecting vulnerable people, and saving lives every day.

WHO support in 2025 included:

Delivering



of medical supplies to nearly 1,000 health facilities, reaching over 1 million people.



Installing

50

mobile health and emergency units where facilities were destroyed.



Helping hospitals stay open during power attacks by ensuring backup electricity and heating



Providing basic medicine kits to more than

30,000

people in frontline and remote areas.



Supporting over

14,000

primary health care visits in hard-to-reach locations.



Helping evacuate more than

4,500

patients needing specialized care.



Training health workers in infection control and mental health support.



Coordinating

134

partners to deliver life-saving health services across priority regions.

Roman Oleksiv's story

Ten-year-old Roman Oleksiv is alive today because help arrived in time. In July 2022, Roman and his mother Halyna were waiting for a doctor's appointment in Vinnytsia, Ukraine, when missiles struck the clinic. Twenty-six people were killed, including Halyna. Roman survived, crawling from the rubble with internal injuries and burns covering 45% of his body.

Within days, Roman was evacuated through a newly established medical evacuation programme supported by WHO, the European Union, and partner countries. The journey was complex and risky, but Roman was safely transported to Germany, where he received specialist burn care unavailable in Ukraine.

He spent over 100 days in intensive care, endured 35 surgeries, and fought life-threatening infections. Doctors once feared he might never walk again. Today, Roman is back in Ukraine—walking, dancing, playing the accordion, and winning international competitions.

"Roman is so happy to be back. His eyes are shining," said his father, Jaroslav. "He is back to doing the things he loves." Recently, Roman even won first prize in an international competition for accordionists.

“

This is what I dreamed for him. Something to wake up for, something to get excited about. It lights him up from inside.

Jonathan Vinke, an advanced paramedic, was part of the team that cared for Roman. "When I first met him, his life was in the balance," he says. "Thanks to the care he received in Germany, thanks to his own resilience, by the time I met him again, he was walking, dancing and pursuing his dreams, with a life ahead of him. It's a testament to the importance of the medevac programme, to the strength of the human spirit."

Behind every vaccine delivered, every outbreak contained, and every patient evacuated is a life protected and a future preserved.

