
WHO launches its first Investment Round to sustainably finance its Health for All mandate



Brazil, France, Germany, Norway, and Qatar declare their support for the fit-for-future financing strategy

The World Health Organization (WHO) launched its first-ever [Investment Round](#) on Sunday as part of a broader plan to transform the way the Organization is funded heading into an era of climate change, mass migration, pandemic threats, an ageing world population, and turbulent geopolitics.

The launch, on the eve of the Seventy-Seventh World Health Assembly, marks the start of a year-long series of engagements and events, co-hosted by countries, where Member States and other donors will be invited to contribute funds to WHO's strategy for 2025 through 2028 and show high-level political commitment to WHO and global health.

The Investment Round will culminate in November with a major pledging event to be hosted by Brazil around the G20 Leaders' Summit.

"It's about ensuring WHO is fully funded and improving the quality of the funding we receive. Much of the funding we receive is unpredictable, reactive, and tightly defined," Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said, opening the high-level event on the eve of the Health Assembly. "The Investment Round aims to change that, by generating funding that is more flexible, predictable, and resilient."

WHO's third investment case, to be launched at the Health Assembly on Tuesday 28 May, estimates that full funding of the strategy, the [Fourteenth General Programme of Work \(GPW 14\)](#), will contribute to saving 40 million lives from 2025-2028.

High-level support for Investment Round

During Sunday's high-level event, the Government of Brazil announced that as part of its G20 presidency, the country will host high-level events including at the Leaders' Summit in November to support the Investment Round and rally countries to join the initiative.

"Global problems need global solutions, and no other organization has turned out to be in a better position to provide us a chance to come to global solutions," Brazil's Minister of Health Nísia Trindade said in a video address. "We will use the convening power of G20 to help mobilize efforts to make the Investment Round a success."

Qatar Minister of Health Dr Hanan Mohamed Al Kuwari announced a contribution of US\$ 4 million in fully flexible funds to the Investment Round, and an intention to contribute further.

"Health care is a fundamental human right and we must continue to invest in the World Health Organization to safeguard our health. Unity is the key to our success," Dr Mohamed Al Kuwari said.

France, Germany, and Norway announced that they would serve as co-hosts for the Investment Round.

"The WHO must be the guardian of scientific rigour, the whistleblower, and above all, the orchestra conductor, in Geneva and in each of its Member States, of the actions of all those involved in global health," said Frédéric Valletoux, Minister Delegate in charge of Health and Prevention, France.

"We as Member States need to deliver more predictable, more flexible, and sufficient funding of the WHO," Norway's Health Minister Jan Christian Vestre said. "Norway is committed to co-host the Investment Round, which will be an important step in securing the Organization more

sustainable financing.”

Further statements of support for the Investment Round came from Dr Gabriel Leung representing the Institute of Philanthropy, and former UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown, who is WHO’s Ambassador for Global Health Financing.

Barbados Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley accepted a Global Health Leaders Award for lifetime achievement from WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, and gave a statement supporting the WHO Investment Round and noting how important it was for Small Island Developing States.

“We live in a world where we ought to know better, and I say so on the launch of this Investment Round largely because what is being asked for is miniscule in proportion to where money is being spent elsewhere,” Ms Mottley said.

As part of Sunday’s event, prizes were awarded to winners of the 5th edition of WHO’s Health for All Film Festival by Indian actor, filmmaker and social advocate Nandita Das, a member of the distinguished international festival jury.

The launch event featured performances by internationally-acclaimed Egyptian opera singer Farrah El-Dibany and Franco-American pianist Jeff Cohen.

A post-event reception was hosted by Germany at WHO headquarters, opened by Karl Lauterbach, Federal Minister of Health. The reception also featured remarks from basketball star and childhood obesity control champion Pau Gasol, and a performance by Sherrie Silver, choreographer, dancer, actor, UN development advocate and philanthropist, and a troupe of young dancers.

Matching WHO’s funding to its obligations

The WHO Executive Board approved the Investment Round in January, noting that funding had not kept pace with the Organization’s mandate to promote well-being, prevent disease, expand access to health care, and coordinate the world’s response to a growing number of health emergencies brought on by war, disease outbreaks, and natural disasters.

By 2022-23, Member States’ assessed contributions (membership dues) covered only 13% of WHO’s budget, which left the Organization reliant on voluntary, often earmarked and unpredictable contributions to fund its work, a dynamic that created uncertainty and inefficiency across the Organization and left areas where approved activities went unfunded.

Holding an Investment Round was one of the key recommendations put forward by the Member State-led WHO Working Group on Sustainable Financing and approved by Member States to make WHO a predictably, sustainably, flexibly funded organization. Member States have also approved an increase in their assessed contributions, on the pathway to providing 50% of WHO’s base budget by 2030. With the Investment Round, WHO is seeking to expand its donor base by mobilizing new contributions from the WHO Member States that have not yet provided voluntary contributions and by tapping into new private sector donors through the WHO Foundation.

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