



WHO Executive Board 2023  
Statement by the State of Israel

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**Item #16 Social Determinants of Health**

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The report correctly identifies the challenges posed by COVID-19 in terms of health equality. In Israel, the entire population is entitled to free health care through government-funded HMOs, through which the majority of the population was vaccinated quickly and efficiently against COVID-19, minimizing adverse effects and mitigating the crisis.

Tackling health inequality, as noted in the report, demands multi-sectoral approaches. As such, in 2021, the Ministry of Health established the multi-sectoral Committee to Design a National Strategy for Reducing Health Inequities in a Decade, comprised of 30 members from government, academia, the health system and civil society. Among the interim recommendations are: adapting the health system to all levels of society; integrating system-wide measurement tools to eliminate health inequities; institutionalizing municipal and regional public health infrastructure; reducing inequities among infants and children; strengthening governance within the Ministry of Health on health inequalities; and expanding universal services to increase outreach. Final recommendations, expected in the coming weeks, will be integrated into the Ministry's 10 Year Plan.

Another policy approach mentioned in the report to which Israel gives great importance is "Health in all Policies". Israel's health policy is integrated within Ministry of Education and local government decision-making, where local municipalities make data-driven health decisions with the help of a health portal that maps population health.

Additionally, the Ministry has implemented a unique plan to tackle health inequality in the Arab population, dealing with a variety of health issues from obesity to dental health and toddler health. It aims to reform the health services that are provided in Arab-majority cities and towns with the aim of bridging the equality gap.