



79TH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Public Health Emergencies: Preparedness and Response

UNFPA Statement

Thank you, Chair

The global state of polycrisis, with concurrent effects of climate change, conflict and population displacement, continues to increase the risk of outbreaks and public health emergencies. No country is immune. Everyone, everywhere, regardless of geopolitical or socioeconomic context, must be prepared.

At the 78th World Health Assembly we were called upon to prioritize pandemic preparedness and strengthen health systems to ensure timely and equitable response to public health emergencies.

As we have seen during the COVID19 pandemic, women and girls are extremely vulnerable during these crises, facing restricted access to essential maternal and newborn health care, family planning and heightened risk of gender-based violence. We also experienced the difficulties of getting commodities to where they were needed, as supply chains came under strain.

UNFPA is the UN's lead agency for sexual and reproductive health and rights, in both development and humanitarian contexts. We work with governments and partners before, during and after crises to build resilient health and protection systems, support life-saving SRH and GBV services, and help ensure continuity of care for women, girls and young people.

UNFPA supports Member States to invest in the health and protection of women, girls and young people: integrating the life saving interventions of the Minimum Initial Service Package into national preparedness and response plans; prepositioning essential supplies; training and equipping midwives to prevent disease transmission while providing critical SRH services; and ensuring protection from and response to GBV.

Investments in the health and protection of women, girls and young people is an investment in the future. In partnership, we can ensure that no one is left behind during times of crises while safeguarding the health and wellbeing of future generations.

Thank you