



Multi-partner Trust Funds and Joint Programs

WHO's corporate approach to Inter-Agency Pooled Funds

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goal targets requires ever more effective partnerships and resources

United Nations Multi Partner Trust Funds (MPTFs) and Joint Programs (collectively referred to as inter-agency pooled funds) provide a significant opportunity for WHO to work with partners by maximizing efficiencies and impact on key health and development issues. WHO uses its leadership in health to maximum the opportunities that Inter-Agency Pooled Funds bring. MPTFs and Joint Programs are especially important for driving forward multisectoral action, which is critical in reaching many of the targets of the health SDGs.

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*'The indivisible and interconnected nature of the SDGs has reinforced the imperative for more **flexible and predictable funding**. Inter-Agency Pooled Funds help strengthen coordination and collaboration across entities of the United Nations development system.'*

Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General

Inter-agency pooled funds were established by Members States to bring the United Nations together

Inter-agency pooled funding brings the United Nations together by strengthening coherence, reducing fragmentation, broadening donor bases, spreading and sharing risks across partners, and making it easier to tackle multi-dimensional challenges with comprehensive and innovative solutions. These funds also encourage greater transparency and the opportunity to share experience.

Inter-Agency Pooled Funds are an important part of the United Nations reform process, improving collaboration and reducing programmatic fragmentation across humanitarian, peace and security, and sustainable development. In general, pooled funds allow for soft earmarked funding at country level as well as by thematic area. Some of the benefits of pooled funded are set out in Box 1.

Box 1. Advantages of inter-agency pooled financing

Transparency and agility: A low-cost mechanism that uses United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) pre-cleared standard legal templates and MPTF Office online platforms for efficiency, lesson-learning, transparency and management purposes.

Robust theory of change: Stakeholder-led design fully aligned with SDGs.

Center of gravity: Aligns projects and programmes around SDGs, reducing duplication and fragmentation across multiple projects.

Humanitarian-development-peace nexus: Provides flexible financing suitable for cross-sector collaboration across the entire nexus.

Innovation: expands the number of partners that contribute to, and implement, funds – and provides platforms for sharing experience across implementing partners as well as increased participation of partners from the southern hemisphere.

Reform-booster: Fully aligned with the UN reform process to deliver better results through joint action.

MPTFs and Joint Programs help WHO to strengthen in-country support to Member States in line with its mandate and comparative advantage

WHO recognizes that many of today's health challenges are multisectoral and require action across the UN system. In addition to the advantages of inter-agency pooled funding, WHO also recognizes that they provide an important opportunity to tap into new and diverse funding.

WHO is committed to supporting implementation of the 2024 Funding Compact for UN support to the SDGs by enhancing UN-system wide joint resource mobilization and pooled funding and working with Member States to increase contributions to inter-agency pooled funds and donor coordination (Box 2).¹

Inter-agency pooled funds also contribute to financing WHO's Fourteenth General Programme of Work 2025–2028 and the Investment Round, providing resources that support and add value to WHO's core funds. WHO's participation in many health-related pooled funds demonstrates WHO's leadership and convening role within the health sector.

WHO currently receives around US\$ 40 million annually through MPTFs. With the UN Sustainable Development Group Funding Compact, WHO stands to benefit from ever greater investment in inter-agency pooled funds – both those that WHO leads as well as others where WHO is a partner.

Box 2. Interagency pooled funds and the Funding Compact for the UN's support to the SDGs

In support of a more collaborative and integrated UN development system, Member States should:

- increase contributions to interagency pooled funds to enhance the collective results of the UN development system at all levels; and
- provide adequate, predictable, and sustainable funding to the Resident Coordinator system.

At the same time, and towards the same objective, UN development system entities will:

- enhance joint resource mobilization and partnerships, and pooled funding mechanisms; and
- fully support coordination of UN development activities, including the leadership role of Resident Coordinators, and a whole-of-UN approach to all aspects of the development planning cycle.

Paragraphs 21 and 22, Funding compact for the UN's support to the SDGs. UN Sustainable Development Group. 2024

In addition to a number of UN joint programmes, WHO hosts three MPTFs

Working for Health: Created in 2017 by WHO, the International Labour Organization and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development to assist countries to expand and transform the health and social workforce for the SDGs. Equal access to quality health care and global health security depends on the availability of trained and capable health workers where they are most needed.

Antimicrobial Resistance: Launched in 2019 by WHO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Organization for Animal Health to catalyze and accelerate progress on One Health approaches to antimicrobial resistance in low- and middle-income countries, especially by supporting the implementation of antimicrobial resistance national action plans.

Health4Life: Established in 2021 by WHO, UNICEF and the United Nations Development Programme to catalyze country action and scale up domestic financing for noncommunicable diseases and mental health.

¹ https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/Funding%20compact_English.pdf

MPTF fund portfolios for [Working for Health](#), [Antimicrobial resistance](#) and [Health4Life](#) are published on the [MPTF Office website](#).

Each of the funds works to deliver common results, in a way that responds to global, regional and country level priorities and commitments, in line with UN General Assembly, G7 and G20 political declarations and commitments, WHO resolutions and action plans, as well as financing for development and aid and development effectiveness principles. The secretariats for these three MPTFs are in WHO, working closely with their UN partners and the MPTF Office (Box 3).

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'It is more important than ever that the UN continues to stand together in solidarity to tackle complex challenges with comprehensive solutions.'

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, describing the COVID19 Response & Recovery Fund

[The NCD and Mental Health MPTF is] 'country-led, with a focus on equity and impact in our collective drive towards universal health coverage. I call on all development partners to support the Trust Fund, a critical initiative whose time has come.'

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, describing the NCD and Mental Health (Health4Life) Fund

Box 3. The MPTF Office

The MPTF Office is the centre of expertise in pooled funding. The office is dedicated to the design and administration of multi-stakeholder pooled financing instruments, supporting the launch of over 150 pooled funds across the entire UN spectrum.

The Office manages over 200 trust funds, received over US\$ 19 billion in deposits, and has programmes overseen by more than 50 UN organizations.

WHO participates in and receives funds from a number of other multi-partner trust funds

- The [UN Peacebuilding MPTF](#) has provided funds to support WHO's global health for peace work in the area of mental health, youth and gender, in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Liberia, Somalia, and Sri Lanka.
- The [Joint SDG MPTF](#) was established to create financing strategies and investments to accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It has provided funds to support WHO activities in countries including Albania, Cambodia, Gabon, Jamaica, Kenya, Morocco and Ukraine.
- The [UN COVID-19 Response & Recovery MPTF](#).
- The [Spotlight Initiative](#) to end violence against women and girls, which provides the opportunity for WHO to apply for funds to scale up country-level action in this area.

WHO working as one

WHO's corporate support for developing and delivering Inter-Agency Pooled Funds is led by a number of global and regional departments² and teams and country offices. Together they identify areas ripe for new Inter-Agency Pooled Funds. WHO also leads the UN Fiduciary Management Oversight Group (capacity building working group) to build better understanding of the role of pooled funds within the context of UN reform.

² Examples of departments and units that work on pooled funds include Coordinated Resource Mobilization, WHO Office in New York, Legal, Compliance, Risk Management and Ethics Office, Evaluation, Fiduciary Management Oversight Group. Development Coordination Office and relevant technical units.

Strengthening WHO's corporate approach to interagency pooled funds

WHO's corporate approach includes:

Aligning interagency pooled funds with the Investment Round;

Integrating pooled funds into GPW14; and

Active participation of WHO leadership in pooled fund steering committees.

WHO is therefore committed to:

Elevating the visibility of WHO's hosted MPTFs and other pooled funds through WHO governing bodies, Member State briefings, strategic dialogues, as well as other through multilateral forums such as the G20 and G7, the World Economic Forum, the Global Health Forum, and the World Health Summit, to emphasize our commitment to UN reform, building a One-UN, and harnessing the capacity of other UN agencies to deliver the health-related SDGs.

Promoting internal and external dialogue to share lessons on pooled funds, including capturing examples of best practice globally, regionally and at country level.

Providing guidance and technical expertise to support countries to avail themselves of funding opportunities from pooled funds, while building broader WHO capacity to enhance engagement with Inter-Agency Pooled Funds.

Enhancing visibility of donor contributions to pooled funds.

Adopting WHO internal standards, harmonized and simplified operational processes relating to pooled funds.

Strengthening WHO's leadership role on inter-agency pooled funding discussions, decision-making, and capacity building across the Fiduciary Management Oversight Group and other platforms.



Credit: WHO / Petra Hongell