Definition and progress

What is the UHPR?

The Universal Health and Preparedness Review (UHPR) is a member-state led voluntary review mechanism whereby countries agree to a voluntary, regular, and transparent peer review of their comprehensive national health emergency preparedness capacities. It will help to support national public health systems, infrastructures, and capacities for health emergency preparedness. Its aim is to promote collective global action for preparedness, by bringing Member States and stakeholders together at national, regional, and global levels, in a spirit of solidarity, to make the world safer.

What is the added value of the UHPR?

The UHPR brings invaluable benefits at both global and national levels. At global level, it encourages solidarity peer-learning and pooling of best practices between Member States. Additionally, it ensures that health emergency preparedness remains a priority on the global agenda, preventing the cycle of “panic and neglect”. At the national level, the UHPR enhances multisectoral and whole of society approaches, promoting collaboration across various sectors of society. It elevates health emergency preparedness to the highest levels of government. It safeguards hard-won gains from the COVID-19 response (e.g., networks, knowledge, experience). Moreover, it promotes predictable and sustainable resources by identifying domestic funding sources, as well as areas for enhanced support by donors/partners.

What is the status of the UHPR?

Initially proposed by Central African Republic and Benin, WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus announced the launch of the voluntary pilot phase of the UHPR in November 2020. In resolution WHA 74.7 (2021), Member States requested the Director-General to develop a detailed concept note for Member States’ consideration.
At WHA75 (May 2021) WHO Member States adopted the UHPR Concept Note¹.

At EB 154 (January 2024) WHO Member States adopted the Decision on UHPR and requested WHO DG to continue the voluntary pilot phase and provide a report to WHA78².

Since WHA75, two ongoing intergovernmental processes are currently discussing the UHPR, namely the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) and IHR Working Group.

Furthermore, the UHPR is integrated into the new architecture for strengthening health emergency prevention, preparedness, response, and resilience (HEPR)³, serving as a mechanism for driving accountability among Member States.

How do countries express interest in undertaking a voluntary pilot?

Interested Member States can express their interest through an official communication to WHO Director General, WHO Regional Director or WHO Representative (for countries having a WHO Country Office).

Will the UHPR be linked to the pandemic accord or the IHR amendment process?

Two ongoing intergovernmental processes are currently discussing the UHPR, namely the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) and IHR Working Group.

The work by the INB to draft and negotiate a WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response is ongoing. In its Proposal for negotiating text of the WHO Pandemic Agreement, 30 October 2023, Article 8 on Preparedness monitoring and functional reviews mentions that: "The Parties shall establish, no later than 31 December 2026, a global peer review mechanism to assess pandemic prevention, preparedness and response capacities and gaps, as well as levels of readiness, with the aim of promoting and supporting learning among Parties, best practices, actions and accountability, at the national, regional and global levels". Similarly, the IHR Working Group is also discussing this proposal. WHO is looking to Member States for their guidance on where to anchor the UHPR and will work to ensure the necessary alignment.

---


² EB 154 Decision on the Universal health and preparedness review

³ Strengthening the global architecture for health emergency prevention, preparedness, response and resilience
What is its relation to the HEPR process?

During WHA75, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus introduced 10 proposals aimed at enhancing the global framework for Health Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Resilience (HEPR). Subsequently, during WHA76, Dr. Tedros presented a report focused on reinforcing the global architecture for HEPR. The UHPR is embedded into the HEPR, serving as a key mechanism to ensure mutual accountability. The HEPR proposals underscores the UHPR's role in fostering mutual accountability through a voluntary, transparent, Member State-led peer review mechanism that establishes regular high-level and multisectoral intergovernmental dialogue between Member States on their national HEPR capacities.

Relation to existing monitoring and evaluation tools under the IHR Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

How is the UHPR different from existing mechanisms such as the JEEs?

The UHPR stands out as a unique mechanism focusing on governance, systems, and financing aspects of health security. It operates as a top-down approach, convening high-level authorities through multi-sectoral and whole-society dialogues involving country leaders and policymakers (including presidents, ministers, parliamentarians), partners, and civil society. It draws insights from various sources such as the IHR Monitoring and Evaluation Framework tools (SPAR, JEE, SimEx, AAR/IAR), NAPHS, and other pertinent reports and plans. The country capacity review is based on country priorities and context. Following the national phase, the UHPR comprises a global dialogue where reviewed member states present their reports, share experiences, and address comments and questions from their peers. This global process fosters mutual support and cooperation, thereby enhancing solidarity and transparency for better global health security.

The JEE, on the other hand, is a technical evaluation tool that does not assess strategic capacities like governance. It follows a bottom-up approach, convening technical experts rather than high-level government officials. While the JEE also utilizes information from various sources, including the IHR MEF tools, it does not include the same level of high-level and whole-of-society dialogue as the UHPR. The country capacity assessment is based on 19 standardized technical areas (with a scoring system) that does not take into account country priorities and context. Following the initial self-evaluation conducted by the host country, the JEE comprises a joint evaluation conducted by a team of national and international technical experts. This process aims to measure country-specific status and progress in developing capacity to prevent, detect, and rapidly respond to public health threats.
Will the UHPR replace existing monitoring, evaluation, assessment, and capacity-building tools?

Existing tools under the IHR Monitoring and Evaluation Framework aim to assist Member States in developing, strengthening, and maintaining their preparedness capacities. WHO has developed updates to existing tools, including the State Party Assessment Report (SPAR) and the Joint External Evaluations (JEEs). These tools will continue to play an important role in assessing and establishing the preparedness status of a country.

The UHPR shall not replace existing tools but will complement them by providing a process to elevate the technical results of existing tools to the highest level of government and engage Member States as part of an intergovernmental dialogue.

Process and approach of the national review phase

How will the national review phase be conducted?

The national review will be a country-led, whole-of-government and whole-of-society process. It begins with the Minister of Health sending an engagement letter to the WHO DG, followed by an official response. Subsequently, a UHPR kick-off meeting convenes the Minister of Health, the country's permanent representation in Geneva, and WHO senior management. Then, the Minister of health presents the UHPR to the President/Prime Minister, ministers, and other government members during inter-ministerial meetings to secure their political engagement and commitment.

Next, UHPR National platforms (commission and secretariat) are established based on country priorities. The country then drafts its UHPR Report and hosts a Preparatory Mission to ensure readiness for the upcoming high-level mission. Lastly, the country hosts the UHPR high-level mission, convening senior managers from WHO and partner agencies with national leadership to deliberate on country priorities. Afterward, the country concludes its national report, endorsed by the president/prime minister, and shares it with WHO for publication.

How much time does it take to complete a national UHPR pilot?

WHO currently recommends that Member States allocate four months to undertake the necessary consultations and technical work to draft the national report. However, this timeframe may vary based on the country's size and the number of stakeholders involved. It is imperative for countries to prioritize preparedness by engaging and garnering support from national leadership from the outset to ensure adherence to this schedule.

How will the global peer review be conducted?

The peer review shall be based on interactive dialogue between the Member State undertaking the review and a group of Member States. During this discussion, any Member State can ask questions, make comments, or recommendations to the States under review. An outcome report
will summarize the dialogue between Member States. The first GPR meeting will be held on February 13th and 14th, 2024. The working methods and procedures of this phase shall be subject to consultation with Member States. Further details regarding the global peer review phase are available through this link: UHPR global peer review phase - FAQ

**Where can I find more information on the UHPR?**

For further information on the UHPR, the UHPR process and documents, please visit our website: [UHPR Webpage](#)

The WHO UHPR Secretariat can be contacted by email at: [UHPR@who.int](mailto:UHPR@who.int)