



IV. SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE TOPIC GUIDE

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PRESENTED BY



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A. Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the political declarations on HIV/AIDS (10)

Since the first reported case of an AIDS-related illness, over 70 million people have been infected and over 30 million have died as a result of one of these illnesses.⁴² The global HIV and AIDS epidemic remains a concern for the international community that impacts people of all identities and backgrounds. However, marginalized regions and communities continue to experience ongoing discrimination and violence that prevent access to healthcare.⁴³ These key populations remain at the forefront of global partnerships in combating the spread and impact of HIV/AIDS.

The 2016 Political Declaration built upon the framework of the 2001 Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS to create a comprehensive and inclusive approach to addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic by focusing on education, prevention, medical intervention, and reducing stigma and discrimination.⁴⁴ The 2016 Declaration recognized the scientific advancements in increasing access to antiretroviral treatments and noted an overall decline in children born with the virus. Despite these valuable changes in slowing the effects of HIV/AIDS, an intersectional approach in recognition of social and cultural influences.

Economic and cultural resource gaps⁴⁵ continue to hinder progress made through strategic partnerships such as UNAIDS. Member states were urged to take action against the economic and social resource gaps in The 2021 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: Ending Inequalities and Getting on Track to End AIDS.⁴⁶ The 2021 declaration builds upon efforts taken through global partnerships such as UNAIDS to address the social and legal barriers impacting access to health services for people living with HIV and vulnerable populations. Recommendations to remove these barriers include community-led responses, societal enablers, equitable access to health care, a people-centric approach, sustainable funding streams, and fostering diverse global partnerships.⁴⁷

In June 2022, the General Assembly adapted the current approach in response to the immense impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on public health systems.⁴⁸ While the coronavirus undoubtedly strained health systems and impeded progress made toward reducing HIV/AIDS; it also highlighted differentiated service models for community-centric approaches to health care. Emphasizing the

⁴² <https://www.unaids.org/en/whoweare/about>

⁴³ chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/A_76_783_en.pdf

⁴⁴ <https://www.un.org/pga/71/2017/06/01/implementation-of-the-declaration-of-commitment-on-hiv-aids-and-the-political-declarations-on-hiv-aids/>

⁴⁵ <https://www.un.org/pga/71/2017/06/01/implementation-of-the-declaration-of-commitment-on-hiv-aids-and-the-political-declarations-on-hiv-aids/>

⁴⁶ https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/A_76_783_en.pdf

⁴⁷ https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/A_76_783_en.pdf

⁴⁸ <https://www.un.org/pga/76/2022/06/09/ga-plenary-meeting-on-the-implementation-of-the-declaration-of-commitment-on-hiv-aids-and-the-political-declarations-on-hiv-aids-item-11/>

importance of utilizing community partnerships to address the intersection of social and scientific approaches to treatment and preventative health care.

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B. Global Health and foreign policy (129)

Global health disparities are one of the most dramatic ways in which the developing world lags behind those most-developed nations. The reality of health and well-being in the developing world is starkly different from the heavily-industrialized nations in the global north. Poverty continues to facilitate inequities in health. For example, nations in Western Europe have an infant mortality rate of 3 deaths per thousand live births and an average life expectancy at birth of 79 years for men and 84 years for women. By contrast, nations in Southeast Asia have an average infant mortality rate of 31 per thousand live births and a life expectancy at birth of 69 years for men and 73 years for women. The differences are even more stark in Africa with an average infant mortality rate of 50 per thousand live births and life expectancies of 61 years for men and 64 for women.

Life expectancy however, is not the only metric to evaluate global health. According to the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation climate change impacts the health of millions globally.⁴⁹ People are experiencing the direct and indirect consequences of extreme heat, flooding has forced people from their homes, droughts have caused food and water insecurity, and wildfire episodes have increased air pollution. Further, lower respiratory infections and other diseases impacting children have been increasing since COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted. Many young children who were not exposed to RSV, influenza, and other infections are now being infected at a faster rate than before the pandemic.

Work from the United Nations should continue to address these disparities, trying to find programs and initiatives to close the gap between the developed and the developing world in all health metrics. The United Nations has pledged itself to combat these sorts of global health inequities through a variety of initiatives both at the state level, helping countries develop better public health initiatives, and at the international level by sponsoring aid programs and health-distribution projects throughout the global south. In 2023 the World Health Organization celebrated its 75th anniversary and called for countries to address not only inequities in health care but also protections for the workers who provide it.⁵⁰ There is a projected shortage of 10 million healthcare workers by 2030, mainly in developing countries. Addressing this issue will be a key factor in solving global health inequities.

⁴⁹ [11 global health issues to watch in 2023, according to IHME experts | Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation \(healthdata.org\)](#)

⁵⁰ [WHO calls for action to protect, support and expand global health force | UN News](#)

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C. Information and communications technologies for sustainable development (16)

The last half-century has been characterized by the rapid advancement of information and communication technologies, or ICTs. From telegraphs to telephones, the internet, wireless communication, and more, the advancement of ICTs have fundamentally changed how we live our lives. Given their importance to modern society, it is vital to put these technologies to use in sustainable development.

Advancements in sustainable development are often measured against the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), is an agency of the United Nations which holds the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly conference every 4 years, with the next meeting occurring in October 2024.⁵¹ Among other goals, the conference is dedicated to applying ICTs to the SDGs and is a valuable forum for the international community.

Some of the main benefits that ICTs can bring to sustainable development come from their ability to connect communities and disperse information to the populus. Much of what has brought the world so far forward in the last few decades is the ability to communicate with someone across the world as easily as one's neighbors, allowing for the sharing of information nearly instantly. Expanding these capabilities is vital, but it is important to note that the use of ICTs for sustainable development is not an end goal, it is merely a tool.

When considering how ICTs can be used for sustainable development, it is necessary that the development of ICTs be done in an equitable manner. Currently, much of the research into ICTs and their use for sustainable development is undertaken solely by the most developed and technologically advanced nations. While these nations do have the funds to support this research, proper implementation cannot be undertaken without the input and guidance of developing nations and the international community at large.⁵²

⁵¹ <https://www.itu.int/wtsa/2024/>

⁵² https://www.cs.cmu.edu/~rtongia/ICT4SD_Full_Book.pdf

