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# Prompts for Co-Hosts

## World Health Summit 2026 — Main Program

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### Introduction

The World Health Summit (WHS) provides guiding prompts for new co-hosts and partners to support the development of relevant and impactful sessions within current and ongoing global health debates. These prompts are embedded within the overarching WHS leitmotif, “From Crisis to Resilience: Innovating for Health,” and the six central topics of the Summit this year. The leitmotif defines the overall strategic direction of the annual Summit, while the central topics structure the thematic tracks of the main program.

**The prompts are informed by** an analysis of current global health policy debates, relevant scientific literature, institutional reports from international organizations, and survey data collected from WHS stakeholders, including participants, speakers, and members of the Academic Alliance.

**The prompts are intended to** provide an analytical framework to help co-hosts position the focus of their sessions and prioritize key issues and target audiences. Using these prompts can support the development of sessions that are both relevant to WHS stakeholders and conducive to impactful and critical discussions.

**Important note:** The prompts are intended as guidance rather than prescriptions. Sessions may also address issues beyond those reflected in the prompts listed here.

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### WHS Leitmotif 2026:

## “From Crisis to Resilience: Innovating for Health”

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**Context:** Innovation in global health is often associated with new technologies, digital tools, and scientific breakthroughs. However, meaningful innovation may lie equally in rethinking how health systems are financed, governed, and delivered.

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#### Paradigm Shift in Innovation

- What types of health innovations can strengthen health systems, and in which contexts are they most needed?
- Which innovations have the greatest potential to advance health equity?

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#### Balancing Incentives with Equity

- How should global governance frameworks, including intellectual property rights, be designed to balance incentives for innovation with equitable access to health technologies?
- What new mechanisms could better support technology transfer and ensure that innovation responds to local public health needs?

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#### Innovation for Access—and Access to Innovation

- How can innovation help promote more equitable access to health services and technologies?
- How can health systems ensure that new innovations are accessible, affordable, and responsive to public health needs?

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#### Trust, Misinformation, and Public Communication

- How does health-related misinformation and disinformation affect the development, adoption, and uptake of health innovations, and how can these challenges be addressed more effectively?
- How can trust in science and public health systems be strengthened to promote the development and acceptance of innovations, and what roles should governments, scientists, media platforms, and the general public play in this process?



WHS Central Topic:

## Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness, Response (PPPR) & Global Health Security



**Context:** Pandemics remain one of the most significant global health threats, exposing persistent gaps in preparedness, coordination, and equitable access to life-saving countermeasures. Yet amid multiple competing global crises, PPPR often struggles to remain a political priority, raising critical questions about how to ensure the world is better equipped for future health emergencies.

### Institutional Commitments & Financing

- With governments under pressure to respond to multiple competing crises, how can pandemic preparedness secure sustained political attention and long-term financing before the next emergency occurs?
- What incentives could help make health surveillance and health security a permanent political priority rather than a reactive response?

### Distribution & Access to Medical Countermeasures

- What structural barriers continue to prevent the equitable distribution of medical countermeasures—such as vaccines, treatments, diagnostics, and other tools used to respond to health threats?
- How can these barriers be overcome to ensure faster and fairer access during future health emergencies?

### Health System Capacity & Preparedness Gaps

- What gaps in health systems continue to limit effective PPPR?
- How can preparedness gaps in critical infrastructure, supply systems, and the health workforce be addressed?

### International Cooperation & Pandemic Agreement

- How can the Pandemic Agreement strengthen global health security and improve preparedness for future pandemics?
- What steps are necessary to ensure equitable Pathogen Access and Benefit Sharing (PABS) and fair access to resulting medical countermeasures?

WHS Central Topic:

## Global Health Architecture, Governance & Financing



**Context:** Global health is increasingly shaped by shifting political dynamics, evolving financing models, and growing debates about the effectiveness of current governance structures. Against the backdrop of growing geopolitical tensions and shifting aid architectures, critical questions emerge regarding how global health priorities, financing, and institutions can be reoriented to enhance equity, legitimacy, and effectiveness.

### Global Health in a Post-Aid Era

- How should global health actors respond to potential reductions in official development assistance (ODA), development assistance for health (DAH), and funding for multilateral institutions and global health initiatives?
- With fewer than five years remaining to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), what does the limited progress reveal, and what lessons can be drawn to inform global health priorities in a post-SDG era?

### Multilateralism, Global Solidarity, and Regional Leadership

- What types of reforms are needed in the global health architecture to address today's complex and interconnected health challenges?
  - Examples for discussions could include initiatives such as UN80 Reform, UHC2030, the SDG3 Global Action Plan (GAP), Lusaka Agenda, Accra Reset etc.
  - Potential reform approaches could include structural changes (e.g., consolidation, sunseting etc.) as well as functional reforms (e.g., results-based financing, accountability frameworks etc.).

### New Financing and Funding Models

- Funding debate: Who should provide financial resources for global health, and to what extent? (e.g., governments, private investors, philanthropic organizations)
- Financing debate: How should health systems be sustainably financed? (e.g., through taxation, insurance systems, blended finance, or other innovative financing mechanisms)

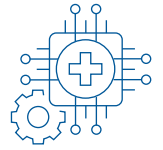
### Power, Rules, and Geopolitics in Global Health

- How can global health priorities better reflect shared health needs rather than geopolitical interests or power-driven agendas?
- How can global health institutions maintain trust, legitimacy, and collective action amid rising nationalism, populism, and skepticism toward international cooperation?



WHS Central Topic:

## Artificial intelligence (AI), Health Data, & Workforce



**Context:** Digital technologies are rapidly reshaping health systems, access to information, and the delivery of care. At the same time, the growing influence of AI, global technology competition, and data-driven systems raises urgent questions about how the digital determinants of health can be governed to ensure equity, sovereignty, and public trust.

### Digital Determinants of Health

- What actions are needed to improve equitable access to digital technologies, strengthen digital literacy, and expand digital infrastructure?
- How can health systems ensure that digital technologies reduce—rather than reinforce—existing social, economic, or geographic disparities?

### Reverse Innovation & Frugal Digital Solutions

- What lessons can be learned from the development and design of digital innovations that originate and evolve in low-resource settings?
- How can digital technologies be designed in terms of frugal design, accessibility, and scalability?

### Governance, Sovereignty & Responsible AI

- How can countries balance data sovereignty with interoperability while preventing new forms of digital colonialism or digital nationalism in global health data ecosystems?
- How can responsible AI be ensured in health systems, and how can challenges such as algorithmic bias, inadequate governance of training data, and limited digital oversight be addressed?

### Workforce Adaptation

- How can the health workforce evolve to meet the demands of digital transformation?
- How can digital tools support health workers and improve care delivery without increasing administrative burdens or creating new risks?

WHS Central Topic:

## Health Equity for Women, Children & Youth



**Context:** Despite decades of global health commitments, major challenges persist in reducing maternal mortality, improving childhood immunization coverage, and addressing the growing youth mental health crisis. These trends raise important questions about how health systems, policies, and governance structures can be better designed to meet the needs of this population.

### Inclusive Healthcare Services

- What systemic, structural, and individual reforms are needed to ensure equitable and inclusive health systems and service delivery for women, children, and youth?
- How can health systems better address gender inequalities that intersect with factors such as race, migration status, socioeconomic conditions, or disability?

### Maternal, Child & Immunization Outcomes

- What barriers continue to hinder progress in reducing preventable maternal deaths?
- How can childhood vaccination strategies more effectively protect children worldwide?

### Youth Mental Health Crisis

- How can the root causes of mental health challenges among children and adolescents be addressed?
  - Examples for discussions could include: the role of climate stress, ongoing conflict and war, the rise of digitalization and social media, inadequate education systems, and limited mental health literacy.

### Youth Participation and Leadership

- How can youth participation be incorporated into global health systems?
- How can young people be meaningfully included in decision-making, agenda-setting, and leadership?



WHS Central Topic:

## Environmental Drivers of Health



**Context:** Environmental determinants will be central to the future of health. From climate change and environmental degradation to unsafe food systems, poor air and water quality, occupational risks, and zoonotic spillovers, these drivers are redefining global health risks—requiring systemic, cross-sector responses beyond traditional healthcare.

### Climate-Health Nexus

- What needs to be done to protect the populations most affected by the consequences of climate change?
- How can the link between climate and health be given greater priority in the public sector, the private sector, academia, and civil society?

### Food Security

- How can countries respond to the growing double burden of hunger, malnutrition, obesity, and non-communicable diseases?
- How can policies promote healthier diets and more sustainable food environments within a globalized food system shaped by powerful commercial interests?

### Urban Health

- How can policymakers respond to rising urban health risks linked to air pollution, poor housing conditions, inadequate waste management, and road traffic injuries in rapidly growing cities?
- What innovative and scalable water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) approaches strengthen disease prevention and outbreak resilience, particularly in fragile and low-resource settings?

### Occupational Health

- What policy and regulatory reforms are needed to better protect workers from occupational health risks, including toxic exposures, extreme heat, and unsafe working conditions?
- How can global health and labor policies better address the unequal burden on workers who face the greatest climate-related health risks?

WHS Central Topic:

## Conflict & Health



**Context:** As armed conflicts intensify and hybrid threats expand, health systems are increasingly caught at the intersection of security, geopolitics, and humanitarian crises. Protecting healthcare, strengthening societal resilience, and using health diplomacy as a tool for peace are becoming central challenges for global health governance.

### Protecting Healthcare in Armed Conflicts

- How can healthcare systems be strengthened to become more resilient and better protected against attacks in conflict settings?
- Why has international humanitarian law often failed to ensure the protection of healthcare workers and facilities, and what mechanisms are needed to strengthen accountability and enforcement?

### Health Diplomacy and Peacebuilding

- How can global health diplomacy be used as a tool to promote peace, stability, and international cooperation?
- How can global health diplomacy function as a mechanism for negotiation and cooperation in a world shaped by geopolitical competition and national interests?

### Hybrid Threats and Societal Resilience

- How can security and surveillance systems better prevent, prepare for, and respond to hybrid threats affecting health systems?
- What strategies are needed to strengthen societal resilience when hybrid attacks undermine patient safety, public trust, and national security?
  - Examples for discussion could include: cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns, election interference, sabotage, energy pressure, the instrumentalization of migration, trade restrictions, and financial manipulation

### Prioritization Across Humanitarian Crises

- Amid a global landscape of multiple simultaneous conflicts, how can the international community ensure that the most severe humanitarian and refugee crises receive timely attention and adequate financing?
- What factors within the international system lead to unequal visibility and funding for refugee and humanitarian health crises, and how can global health governance ensure more equitable and needs-based responses?