

Recommendations from the coalition for Preventing Pandemics at the Source (PPATS)
on the
Revised Draft of the Negotiating Text of the WHO convention, agreement or other
international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response

On March 7th 2024, the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) released a [Revised Draft of the Negotiating Text](#) of the WHO convention, agreement, or other international instrument (WHO CA+) on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response to Member States and relevant stakeholders. This text will serve as the basis for negotiations during the ninth INB meeting, March 18th to 28th.

We welcome important inclusions in this text of the **One Health approach** and language supporting and detailing the **prevention of zoonotic spillover** (a form of primary pandemic prevention), particularly in articles 1, 4, and 5.

More broadly, we support language on the **protection of communities at human-animal-environmental interfaces**, the fundamental role of **primary healthcare**, and **equity principles that safeguard vulnerable communities**, especially Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, from future zoonotic outbreaks, epidemics, and pandemics.

To achieve health equity, we need spillover prevention; **without primary prevention, we are accepting the illness and deaths of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in spillover-prone areas**, and the **underprivileged in general** who are almost always the last to benefit from vaccines, therapeutics, and other reactive interventions.

In this advisory note, the [Preventing Pandemics at the Source](#) coalition - a group composed of leading organizations focused on public health, human rights, science, health justice, biodiversity, climate change and Indigenous rights - offers recommendations for how the WHO Pandemic Agreement Negotiating Text could better reflect primary pandemic prevention priorities.

Recommendations:

Text that we recommend be preserved in the draft is shown in *italicized bolded green font*, while text we recommend be added is shown in *italicized, bolded blue font*.

Chapter I. Introduction

Article 1. Use of terms (page 3)

We recommend preserving the following definitions:

(e) "One Health approach" means an integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimize the health of people, animals and ecosystems. It recognizes that the health of humans, domestic and wild animals, plants and the wider environment (including ecosystems) is closely linked and interdependent;

(i) "pathogen with pandemic potential" means any pathogen that has been identified to infect a human and that is: novel (not yet characterized) or known (including a variant of a known pathogen), potentially highly transmissible and/or highly virulent with the potential to cause a public health emergency of international concern;

We suggest adding the following definitions for (1) “prevention” and (2) “prevention of pathogen spillover from animals to humans”.

1. “Prevention” means the systems, policies, and procedures used to determine, assess, avoid, mitigate, and reduce public health threats and risks. This definition captures interventions needed to mitigate risk and reduce the likelihood or consequences of spillover events at the human, animal, or ecosystem interfaces. Such interventions frequently reside with agriculture, food, wildlife management, or environmental sectors, highlighting the importance of a multisectoral, “One Health” approach, but also include some health sector interventions (e.g., routine immunization against epidemic-prone diseases).¹

2. “Prevention of pathogen spill-over from animals to humans” means shifting the infectious disease control paradigm from reactive to proactive (primary prevention) and includes addressing the drivers of disease emergence, namely ecological, meteorological, and anthropogenic factors and activities that increase spillover risk, in order to reduce the risk of human infection. It is informed by, among other actions, biosurveillance in domestic and wild animals, people and the environment, understanding pathogen infection dynamics, and implementing intervention activities.²

¹This definition of prevention is used by the World Bank-hosted [Pandemic Fund](#)

²This definition of prevention of pathogen spillover is used by the the One Health High-Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP) publication titled [“Prevention of zoonotic spillover: From relying on response to reducing the risk at source”](#)

³This definition of collaborative surveillance can be found in a WHO HEPR publication titled [“Defining collaborative surveillance”](#)

Chapter II. The world together equitably: Achieving equity in, for and through pandemic prevention, preparedness and response

We strongly support the continued inclusion of Articles 4 and 5 in the WHO Pandemic Agreement. As highlighted by the WHO-convened One Health High-Level Expert Panel, “if there is to be serious commitment combined with good evidence, knowledge, attitude and practices to reduce the risk of occurrence of future pandemics - versus just trying to reduce pandemic spread through improved responses - it is essential that discussions and actions on pandemic prevention focus on the primary prevention of pathogen spillover as the first decisive step.”

Additionally, we recommend that surveillance include the environmental, animal health and public health sectors; thus the title of this article should be renamed accordingly.

Article 4. Pandemic prevention and surveillance (page 6)

We recommend preserving the following text:

3. (e) zoonotic spillover and spillback prevention: (i) identify settings and activities that create or increase the risk of disease emergence and re-emergence at the human- animal-plant-environment interface; (ii) take measures to reduce risks of zoonotic spillover and spillback associated with these settings and activities, including measures aimed at safe and responsible management of wildlife, farm and companion animals, in line with relevant international standards and guidelines;

Article 5. One Health (page 7)

We recommend preserving the following text:

2. (b) promote the effective and meaningful engagement of communities in the development and implementation of policies, strategies and measures to prevent, detect and respond to zoonotic outbreaks

We suggest editing the following text:

3. The Parties shall contribute to the further development and updating of international standards and guidelines to **prevent**, detect, reduce risks of, monitor and manage zoonotic spillover and spillback **at the human-animal-environment interface**, in collaboration with WHO and relevant intergovernmental organizations.

Article 9. Research and development (page 10)

We recommend preserving the following text:

2. (i) research on the causes and effects of pandemics, on their prevention and management, including: (1) the epidemiology of emerging diseases, factors driving disease spillover or emergence, and behavioural science [...]