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UNICEF: Topic #2 - Backsliding Immunization Rates

YUNMUN XXXIV

UNICEF exists to ensure children are healthy and capable of reaching their full potential. Immunizations are an integral part of removing roadblocks from the lives of children across the world. Dangerous diseases can be life threatening or leave children with life-long disabilities. Immunizations have helped eradicate some diseases and dramatically curtailed others. Many of history's most fatal diseases are now easily prevented by inoculation. These immunizations provide a security to children that allows them to stay healthy and thrive.

Despite a proven track record, the world is experiencing a decrease in rates of immunization. Around 25 million children go unvaccinated annually¹. These children are left susceptible to easily avoidable dangers. 40% of the instances of un- or under vaccinated children are in countries involved in conflict². Diseases are often more prevalent in places of conflict or poverty, making it precisely the people who need inoculation most who are not receiving it.

UNICEF is on the front lines, doing whatever it takes to deliver and administer vaccines across the world. UNICEF has helped erect cold chain infrastructure across the world to help keep vaccinations refrigerated in order to maintain their potency in any climate or conditions³. UNICEF is in the position to buy vaccines for cheap, allowing for mass vaccination. UNICEF's efforts have led to the immunization of 45% of children below the age of 5 across the globe. Over 23 million lives have been protected since 2000 due to the measles vaccine⁴. The mass proliferation of vaccines and development of better infrastructure and technology has supported many children across the world, providing opportunities for them to develop properly. Nonetheless, there remain

¹ <https://www.unicef.org/immunization>

² <https://www.unicef.org/immunization/immunization-and-conflict>

³ <https://www.unicef.org/supply/what-cold-chain>

⁴ <https://www.unicef.org/immunization>

millions more children beyond UNICEF's reach with more and more joining those numbers as immunization rates fall.

Some questions to guide your research:

- What does your country's immunization program look like? What immunizations does your country require?
- Does everyone have access to vaccines? What are your rates of inoculation?
- Are people in your country's citizens properly educated about immunization? Does your healthcare system facilitate widespread vaccination?
- What can UNICEF do to counter backsliding global immunization rates? What can your country do to contribute to the global immunization effort?

Please do not feel limited to just these guiding questions. Allow your research to help you build your country's independent stance. Make sure the views you present are aligned with those of your country. YU and YUNMUN have a zero tolerance policy for plagiarism. I ask that you please make sure to provide all citations. All papers will be submitted through Turnitin. Please email me at aaschoen@mail.yu.edu with any questions.

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