

World Health Organization Seeking Direct Corporate Funding Through Group Headed by Former Bill Gates Foundation Official

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Apparently not content with the billions of dollars it already receives from the multinational corporate sector and related non-state financiers, the World Health Organization (WHO) has quietly begun seeking still further funding directly from companies.

Operating through a little-known [WHO Foundation](#) set up during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, the new funding drive is headed by Anil Soni, a former pharmaceutical executive who has been a senior advisor to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. With WHO Foundation [board members and other senior officials](#) having additional conflicting histories and connections with organizations such as the World Economic Forum (WEF), the corporate money capture of the WHO and its activities has reached a new level of control.

Set up in May 2020, the WHO Foundation claims it exists because the WHO itself lacks sufficient resources to fulfil its mandate. In fact, so dependent is the WHO already becoming on corporate financing, its 194 member states now provide only around 16 percent of its income through membership fees. The rest comes from so-called 'voluntary contributions', 88 percent of which go to projects that are specified by the donors. The majority of such donations come from the multinational corporate sector and related non-state financiers, with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation providing hundreds of millions of dollars a year and being by far the largest non-government contributor.

Promising 'economic returns' to investors

Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, in close proximity to the WHO itself, the WHO Foundation is [affiliated](#) to the WHO and, while legally independent from it, has a close relationship with its leadership. Regular meetings take place between representatives of the two organizations, with the WHO having an Assistant Director-General sitting as an observer on the WHO Foundation's board.

In a particularly disturbing development, the WHO Foundation has recently partnered with venture capital firm OurCrowd to launch a \$200 million '[Global Health Equity Fund](#)'. Speaking at the [launch of the project](#), which took place in September 2022 at the Clinton Global Initiative in New York, WHO Foundation CEO Anil Soni openly boasted that the fund was looking for "return-seeking private capital" and "economic returns" for investors. While a share of the profits will go to the WHO, it is difficult to see this enterprise as anything other than blatant profiting from disease.

Unsurprisingly, therefore, the [biographies](#) of the WHO Foundation's board and leadership reveal links to industries, organizations, and individuals seen by many as putting profit before health. CEO Anil Soni was Head of Global Infectious Diseases at pharmaceutical company Viartis, for example. He has also served as CEO of the Clinton Health Access Initiative and was a senior advisor to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Chief Operating Officer Karen Hitschke was previously Chief Financial Officer for pharmaceutical company Afectis AG, while board member Clare Akamanzi was a [Young Global Leader](#) of Klaus Schwab's World Economic Forum. Board member Dr. Silvia Gold cofounded multinational pharmaceutical company Insud Pharma.

Funding from the Gates Foundation

Given its vast ongoing donations to the WHO, it is hardly surprising that the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has also started giving money to the WHO Foundation. An initial donation of \$280,000 was made in [May 2021](#) to "support fundraising efforts for the COVAX AMC and vaccine equity", with an additional \$1,000,000 then given in [April 2022](#) to "support the organizational capacity of the WHO Foundation". With concern growing over the influence Gates already wields over the WHO, his funding of the new WHO Foundation will only invite still further suspicion.

Global health surely deserves better than this. As the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated once again, the pharmaceutical industry and its allies view human life purely as a source of endless profits to be made from the sale of patented drugs and vaccines. Far from seeking to change this unethical business model, the WHO and the WHO Foundation would instead appear to be fully supportive of it. It is therefore imperative that a new body is created to replace the WHO corporate setup and tasked with [making natural preventive health a human right](#) worldwide. Achieving '[Health for All](#)' on a global scale depends on it.

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