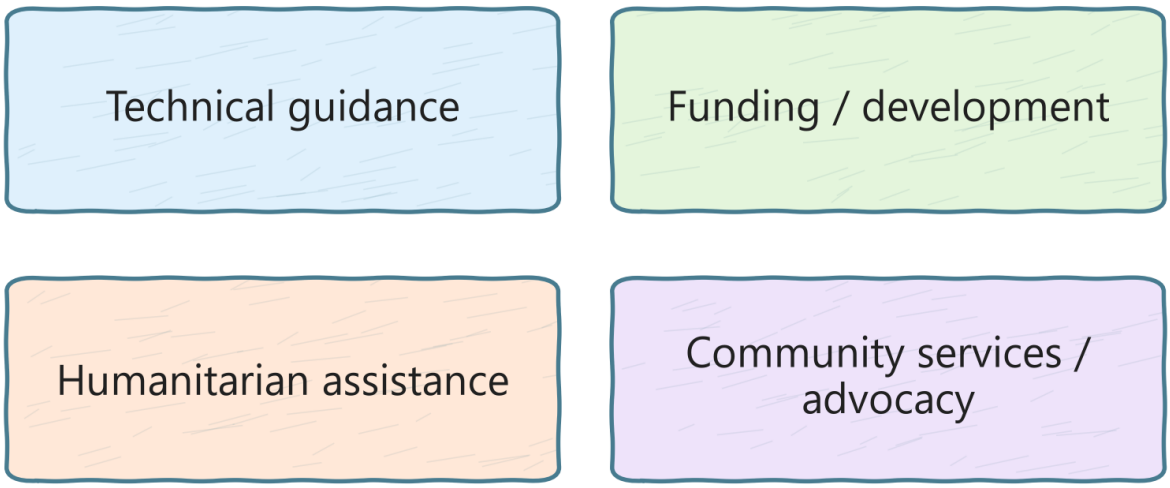
Community Health Nursing II — Unit 13: Health Agencies

Health Agencies

Definition

- A **health agency** is an organisation that contributes to health through services, technical support, financing, research, advocacy or action on social conditions.
- Agencies may work internationally, nationally or within a particular community.
- Their roles differ, so a funding organisation should not be confused with a regulator, technical agency or direct service provider.



Mandates differ; verify current programmes and local contact arrangements.

Complementary agency contributions

Importance

- Health problems often require cooperation across government, professional, voluntary and community organisations.
- Agencies can support disease prevention, nutrition, maternal-child care, emergency relief, rehabilitation and workforce development.
- Effective partnerships strengthen local services and accountability rather than creating disconnected activities.
- Nurses need to know what an agency actually offers locally before advising a patient to seek help from it.

Copyright by Engacy Learning Private Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction or distribution without written consent is strictly prohibited.

Types of Agencies

1. Multilateral Agencies

- Multilateral agencies are supported or governed by several countries and work on shared international priorities.
- United Nations bodies and international development institutions are important examples.

2. Bilateral Development Agencies

- Bilateral agencies organise assistance from one country's government to another country or programme.
- Their names, mandates and administrative arrangements may change over time.

3. Government and Statutory Bodies

- Government bodies provide public services, policy, regulation, programme management or social protection within their legal responsibilities.
- Their work is financed and governed through the applicable public system.

4. Voluntary and Non-governmental Organisations

- Voluntary and non-governmental organisations work outside direct government administration while often partnering with public services.
- They may provide specialised support, community outreach, advocacy or emergency assistance.
- Voluntary status does not remove the need for professional standards, safeguarding and financial accountability.

International Health Agencies

Overview

- International agencies address different parts of health and development, including disease control, reproductive health, nutrition, education and working conditions.
- Their activities are usually carried out in cooperation with governments and local partners.
- Understanding the mandate helps identify the appropriate partner for a particular health problem.

Major Agencies

1. World Health Organization

Identity

- The **World Health Organization**, or **WHO**, is the United Nations specialised agency concerned with international public health.

Copyright by Engacy Learning Private Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction or distribution without written consent is strictly prohibited.

- It works with member states and partners rather than functioning as a single ministry that directly runs every country's health services.

Main Work

- It develops technical norms and guidance, monitors health trends and supports countries in strengthening health systems.
- It coordinates international health action, including preparedness and response to major health emergencies.
- Its work includes communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases, maternal-child health and access to effective care.

Nursing Relevance

- Nurses use appropriately adopted technical guidance for infection prevention, immunisation, patient safety and other areas of care.

2. United Nations Population Fund

Identity

- The **United Nations Population Fund**, or **UNFPA**, is a United Nations agency focused on sexual and reproductive health and rights and related population issues.

Main Work

- It supports maternal health, voluntary family planning, adolescent reproductive health and prevention of gender-based violence.
- It also helps countries use population information for equitable planning.

Nursing Relevance

- Its work supports respectful maternity care, informed reproductive choice and services that reach vulnerable adolescents and women.

3. United Nations Development Programme

Identity

- The **United Nations Development Programme**, or **UNDP**, supports countries in addressing poverty, inequality and sustainable development.

Main Work

- It works on governance, resilience, environmental sustainability and development capacity.
- These areas influence health through income, social protection, functioning institutions and the ability to respond to crises.

Nursing Relevance

- Community nurses can connect health problems with wider barriers such as poverty, exclusion and insecure living conditions.

Copyright by Engacy Learning Private Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction or distribution without written consent is strictly prohibited.

4. World Bank

Identity

- The **World Bank** is an international development institution that provides financing, knowledge and technical support for development.

Main Work

- Health-related work may support service infrastructure, financing reform, nutrition, disease programmes and stronger health systems.
- Projects require attention to implementation, results and social and environmental responsibilities.

Nursing Relevance

- Nurses may contribute service information, workforce planning and quality-improvement experience to projects affecting clinical and community care.

5. Food and Agriculture Organization

Identity

- The **Food and Agriculture Organization**, or **FAO**, is a United Nations specialised agency concerned with food, agriculture and food security.

Main Work

- It supports sustainable food systems, nutrition-related action, food safety and livelihoods connected with agriculture.
- Its work recognises the connections between people, animals, food production and the environment.

Nursing Relevance

- Nutrition counselling and community assessment should consider food availability, affordability and safety rather than individual choice alone.

6. United Nations Children's Fund

Identity

- The **United Nations Children's Fund**, or **UNICEF**, works to protect children's rights and improve their survival, development and wellbeing.

Main Work

- Its programmes include maternal and child health, immunisation, nutrition, water and sanitation, education and child protection.
- It supports emergency responses that protect children and maintain essential services during crises.

Nursing Relevance

- Community nurses work towards similar goals through newborn care, feeding support, vaccination, growth assessment and safeguarding.

Copyright by Engacy Learning Private Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction or distribution without written consent is strictly prohibited.

7. European Commission

Identity

- The **European Commission** is the executive institution of the European Union and contributes to international development and humanitarian assistance through relevant programmes.

Main Work

- Health-related support may include emergency relief, health-system strengthening, research and action on wider development needs.
- Humanitarian and longer-term development activities have different purposes and operational arrangements.

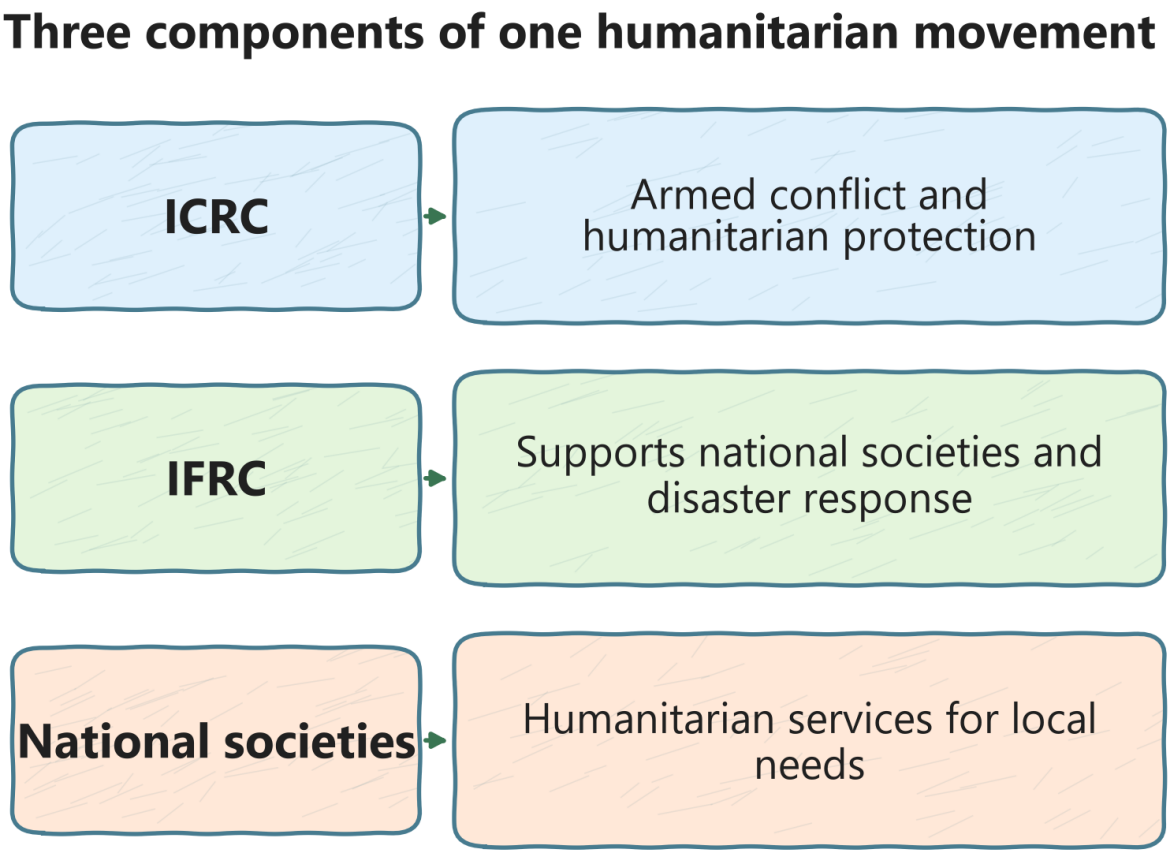
Nursing Relevance

- Nurses involved in partner projects should understand the local service plan, reporting requirements and continuity arrangements after external support ends.

8. International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Identity

- The movement includes the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and national societies.
- These components have related humanitarian aims but distinct responsibilities.



Components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Copyright by Engacy Learning Private Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction or distribution without written consent is strictly prohibited.

FREE PREVIEW

Click here to visit our website

B.SC. NURSING PREMIUM NOTES

Complete B.Sc. Nursing notes by subject and semester are available only in the FirstHope app.

Scan or click here

Click here to get the app >

Available on Google Play

Explore FirstHope Nursing

firsthope.co.in/nursing

Click here to browse Nursing >

Scan or click here

FirstHope Nursing on Instagram

@firsthope.nursing

Click here to follow

App and notes help

Find answers about access and downloads

Click here for help

SEMESTERS I TO VII