CDC Strategy for Global Response to COVID-19 (2020-2023)

Accessible version: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/global-covid-19/global-response-strategy.html

This strategy provides an overarching framework for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's global response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The CDC strategy aligns with the U.S. Government (USG) strategy and the U.S. National Security Strategic goals to protect the American people and ensure the U.S. health security by mitigating the spread of infectious disease threats abroad.

The strategy defines CDC's program priorities and guides development of criteria for monitoring and evaluating achievements and impact on health security at home and abroad. The strategy also addresses the urgent need to prioritize our global response work to reduce the global burden of COVID-19, while continuing to build global capacity to prevent, prepare for and control future pandemics. CDC's response work supports countries and vulnerable populations, while providing global public health leadership in furthering the science and technical experience with COVID-19.

CDC will focus on mitigating the global impacts of COVID-19 and using CDC's scientific and technical expertise to support our global health platform and program successes. In alignment with the USG strategy, CDC will implement activities using a phased approach to the pandemic that accounts for immediate and long-term public health needs, including anticipating and preparing for future global public health emergencies.

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Goals:

The goals of CDC's strategy for global response to COVID-19 are to:

i) Limit transmission of COVID-19;

ii) Minimize the impact of COVID-19 in vulnerable populations;

iii) Reduce specific health threats that pose current and future risk to the United States;

iv) Increase the scientific knowledge about SARS-CoV-2 (the virus responsible for COVID-19) and provide global public health leadership; and

v) Support the development of long-term health security in low- and middle-income countries.

Key principles:

As the lead U.S. public health agency, CDC achieves these global goals by relying on key principles to guide our work and leveraging our expertise in data analytics, disease surveillance, laboratory systems, workforce development, and outbreak response.

- Serve as **credible scientific and technical experts** with international partners and partner country governments for COVID-19 science and public health practice:
  - » Serve as a global reference laboratory for SARS-CoV-2 surveillance, diagnostics, and strain monitoring
  - » Serve as a global leader in developing sound, evidence-based recommendations for the control of COVID-19
  - » Support science-based policy at international, regional, and country levels
- Promote and ensure health equity as a central tenet to the global COVID-19 response.
- Provide technical support **in coordination with other U.S. government agencies and other stakeholders**, including multilateral organizations, to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on groups disproportionately affected.
- Establish, maintain and build new global (multilateral) and local (country specific) **partnerships** to enhance and create networks and systems needed to detect and respond to potential pandemics.
- Work as part of a unified USG response to COVID-19, including working closely with the Department of State (DoS) to protect U.S. citizens and American assets at home and abroad.
- Encourage and facilitate bi-directional learning between the United States and international partners, sharing scientific knowledge and best practices with collaborators participating in the U.S. domestic and global COVID-19 response.
- Establish and strengthen **sustainable country, regional, and international public health systems**, ensuring that COVID-19 specific systems build on, or link to, existing public health systems.
- Leverage existing global health programs, CDC's international footprint and infrastructure.
- Work with key partners and ministries of health to protect critical public health programs.

Strategic Objectives:

1. Strengthen global capacity at country and regional levels to prevent, detect, and respond to COVID-19 cases, including establishing systems and procedures to collect and report timely and accurate data to inform public health decision-making and strengthen the global public health workforce.
2. Prevent and mitigate COVID-19 transmission across borders, in communities, in healthcare facilities, and among healthcare workers, including using approaches to minimize disruptions to essential health services.
3. Contribute to the scientific understanding of COVID-19 and address critical unknowns regarding clinical severity, modes of transmission, and long-term sequelae and immunity.
4. Increase national and global readiness to implement and evaluate vaccination programs and use therapeutics when available.

Annex: Key Activities

Note: This list is meant to demonstrate examples of potential activities for each strategic objective. The list is not necessarily comprehensive, nor does it imply funding support for any specific activity.

1. Strengthen global capacity at country and regional levels to prevent, detect, and respond to COVID-19 cases, including ensuring timely and accurate data to inform public health decision-making and strengthening the public health workforce globally:

- Increase capacity to detect, investigate, report, and respond to COVID-19 transmission.
  - » Provide technical support to partner governments through their Ministries of Health, other relevant ministries, international or national organizations and agencies responsible for human health, animal health, and public-health emergency preparedness to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on groups disproportionately affected.
  - » Increase the capacity of national and local level surveillance and laboratory systems, including strengthening existing respiratory disease surveillance platforms, to detect and report priority pathogens.
  - » Support countries' development and deployment of health information systems to facilitate the timely collection, management, and analysis of critical public health data.
  - » Support training of critical field epidemiologists to analyze and interpret surveillance data and to investigate, track, and contain outbreaks.
  - » Support training of critical laboratorians to ensure timely and accurate laboratory diagnosis and reporting.
  - » Support training and capacity building of data scientists who can analyze and interpret epidemiology and laboratory data to inform decision-making.
  - » Support countries' timely sharing of surveillance and epidemiologic data across all relevant sectors to rapidly identify and disseminate knowledge and build upon the evidence base for successful intervention.
  - » Strengthen border health security, planning, and surveillance at ports of entry.
  - » Support countries to develop and implement public health laws and regulations necessary—including quarantine, isolation, and mitigation measures—to prevent, detect, and respond to health threats.
  - » Promote international coordination as regulatory frameworks are evaluated to ensure responsiveness to emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases.
- Improve coordination and management of the COVID-19 response through a One Health approach that strengthens preparedness activities across human, animal, and environmental health sectors.
  - » Strengthen animal health surveillance systems, including reporting and linkage to human health programs to prevent unnecessary spillover.
  - » Identify risks associated with zoonotic disease transmission (e.g., occupation, animal ownership, livestock, place of residence near wildlife).
  - » Collaborate with international partners to identify animal species involved in COVID-19 spillover to humans (reservoir host or intermediate host).
  - » Assess virus prevalence in various species of animals (reservoirs(s) and possible intermediate host(s)).
  - » Identify and describe possible transmission modes of COVID-19 between animals and humans.
  - » Develop risk reduction strategies for preventing disease transmission between animals and humans, as well as between different animal species.
  - » Support global animal health partners for the development of animal diagnostic tests, including serological tests for animal population screening.
  - » Support development and use of integrated One Health surveillance systems for reporting and responding to animals infected with SARS-CoV-2 (and with other pathogens).
  - » Support global One Health partners, including: The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), and The World Health Organization (WHO), Tripartite in developing guidance and capacity building on the human-animal-environment aspects of COVID-19 and other zoonotic diseases.
  - » Support training and capacity building in the animal health workforce and strengthen linkages with the human health sector.

2. Prevent and mitigate COVID-19 transmission across borders, in the community, in healthcare facilities, and among healthcare workers, including approaches to minimize disruptions to essential health services.

- Mitigate COVID-19 transmission in communities.
  - » Facilitate activities to reduce spread of COVID-19 within communities.
  - » Support contact tracing activities.
  - » Support mitigation activities that address those at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19.
  - » Support risk and media communications, particularly to reach populations with low adherence to mitigation recommendations.
  - » Support water, sanitation, and hygiene activities, targeting groups experiencing limited access to clean water.
  - » Support the development and implementation of appropriate mitigation activities for refugees, displaced persons, and other under-resourced communities.
  - » Evaluate the impact and adherence levels of recommended mitigation measures and share lessons learned across countries.
- Support critical needs of healthcare facilities, healthcare workers, and public health personnel and minimize disruptions to essential health services.
  - » Develop and implement approaches to rapidly identify and isolate suspected COVID-19 among patients, healthcare workers, and visitors to reduce healthcare-associated virus spread.
  - » Provide practical laboratory platforms and point-of-care diagnostics to improve the detection and differential diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 infection and other respiratory viruses.
  - » Strengthen infection prevention and control policies and procedures in rural and urban healthcare settings.
  - » Build on existing infection prevention and control to coordinate and accelerate implementation.
  - » Improve situational awareness of critical information in the healthcare system, such as preparedness, supplies, equipment, and capacity.
  - » Facilitate safe and respectful management of human remains.
  - » Support and evaluate clinical mitigation activities to keep health services from being overwhelmed from COVID-19 patients.
  - » Develop operational guidance for maintaining essential health services and public health activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - » Communicate with essential public health service recipients about the safety and importance of continuing to seek and receive health services.
  - » Secure commodities including personal protective equipment (PPE) and laboratory diagnostics to maintain health services and public health programs.
  - » Coordinate closely between essential health services—such as diagnostic and curative services for malaria and neglected tropical diseases, immunization services, HIV/TB programs, and maternal and child health programs, and COVID-19 programs—during activity planning to modify strategies that ensure COVID-19 precautions, implement protocols for protecting health workers, and apply mitigation measures for targeted communities.
  - » Develop infection prevention and control guidance for healthcare providers, including vaccinators and TB service providers, on how to safely undertake patient-centered work in the COVID-19 environment.
  - » Expand differentiated service delivery models to increase access to lifesaving medical countermeasures – such as antiretroviral treatment for people living with HIV or combination antibiotic regimens for people with active TB cases — through multi-month medication dispensing, community-based delivery options, and increasing clinic hours.
  - » Use effective online modules to continue workforce training and expand telehealth services.

3. Contribute to the scientific understanding of COVID-19 and address crucial unknowns regarding clinical severity, modes of transmission, and duration of immunity following infection and/or vaccination, through support of special investigations.

- » Collaborate with partner countries and organizations to study transmission and conduct modeling to guide prevention and control measures and build research capacity.
- » Conduct and participate in therapeutic and vaccine clinical trials as appropriate.
- » Collect and report data to provide critical information on the clinical course and outcomes of COVID-19 and use that information to improve clinical care.
- » Support countries' timely sharing of research data.
- » Evaluate and assess mitigation measures and strengthened surveillance and use evaluations to improve programs and surveillance systems.
- » Evaluate impact of preventive or protective interventions.
- » Improve pathogen identification and characterization using next-generation sequencing and other advanced molecular technologies.
- » Monitor long-term impacts for people infected with SARS-CoV-2.
- » Collaborate with partner countries and organizations to identify approaches to minimize the impact of COVID-19 on critical public health programs.
- » Contribute to the scientific understanding of COVID-19 and address crucial unknowns regarding clinical severity, extent and pathways of transmission, and infection with support for special investigations (see the CDC Science Agenda for key priority areas).

4. Strengthen national and global readiness to implement and evaluate vaccination programs and use of therapeutics when available.

- » Provide technical assistance in the development of protocols for introduction of new vaccines and therapeutics and the development of communication materials to engage policy makers and communities.
- » Support and strengthen national immunization advisory groups in evidence-based policy making.
- » Provide support to countries and partners for management and distribution of vaccines, therapeutics, and related supplies.
- » Provide technical assistance to countries and partners for monitoring and evaluation, including data analysis and evaluation on the safety of vaccines and therapeutics.