

The Global Health Security agenda: Toward a World Safe and Secure from Infectious Disease Threats

“... we must come together to prevent, and detect, and fight every kind of biological danger — whether it’s a pandemic like H1N1, or a terrorist threat, or a treatable disease.” **--President Barack Obama, 2011**

Our Vision: A world safe and secure from global health threats posed by infectious diseases—where we can prevent or mitigate the impact of naturally-occurring outbreaks and intentional or accidental releases of dangerous pathogens, rapidly detect and transparently report outbreaks when they occur, and employ an interconnected global network that can respond effectively to limit the spread of infectious disease outbreaks in humans and animals, mitigate human suffering and the loss of human life, and reduce economic impact.

The Global Health Security agenda: In partnership with other nations, international organizations and public and private stakeholders, we seek to accelerate progress toward a world safe and secure from infectious disease threats and to promote global health security as an international security priority.

- Preventing and reducing the likelihood of outbreaks – natural, accidental, or intentional – is essential.
- Detecting threats early saves lives.
- Rapid, effective response requires multi-sectoral, international coordination and communication.

Working together with partners around the world in support of the nine objectives of our Global Health Security agenda, we seek to prioritize coordinated action and specific, measurable steps focused on: preventing epidemics, detecting biological threats early, and rapidly responding to disease outbreaks, whether naturally occurring, intentionally produced, or accidentally caused. This effort will support existing agreements under the World Health Organization (WHO) International Health Regulations 2005 (IHR), the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) Animal Health Codes, and the Codex Alimentarius International Food Standards and will complement existing multilateral efforts in this area, including under the G8, G20, Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, Global Health Security Initiative, and regional forums.

The Global Challenge: An interconnected world is increasing the opportunities for human, animal and zoonotic diseases to emerge and spread globally. Today’s health security threats arise from at least 5 sources: the emergence and spread of new microbes; the globalization of travel and food supply; the rise of drug-resistant pathogens; the acceleration of biological science capabilities and the risk that these capabilities may cause the inadvertent or intentional release of pathogens; and continued concerns about terrorist acquisition, development, and use of biological agents. The recent emergence of the H7N9 influenza virus and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus underscore infectious disease as a serious global threat. Since the emergence of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome in 2003, the world has made great progress in strengthening local, regional, and international capacity to prevent, detect and respond to emerging infectious disease threats. Yet, despite important accomplishments, much remains to be done to achieve our shared global health security vision. Only 16% of countries reported reaching full compliance with the core IHR competencies by the June 2012 deadline set by the WHO. Vulnerabilities include geographic areas with limited disease surveillance systems, reluctance to share outbreak information or biological samples, emergence of new pathogens and development of drug-resistance, and the specter of intentional or accidental release of biological agents. Multi-sectoral collaboration and the combined resources and expertise of the health and security sectors will be required to efficiently match resources to needs, avoid redundant efforts, and identify gaps. In 2013, for the first time, the G20 called upon countries to strengthen compliance with the WHO IHR – the standard by which the world measures its preparedness for emerging disease threats, as well as bioterrorist events.

Accelerating Progress: Working together with strong global leadership and an integrated, multi-sectoral effort, we can achieve concrete and impactful gains in the world’s ability to prevent avoidable epidemics, detect threats early, and respond and recover rapidly and effectively – toward the ultimate goal of a world safe and secure from infectious disease threats. To accelerate progress toward this vision, we invite other nations, international organizations, and public and private stakeholders from around the world to join us in promoting global health security by spurring concrete action and tangible improvements in national, regional and international health capacities. This global effort must leverage capabilities and resources across the health and security sectors to enhance biopreparedness and capacity for countering biological threats, no matter the cause. As the international community collectively accelerates progress to advance global health security, it is important that we harmonize our efforts, identify what works, and measure our progress. Working together, we can save lives.

Global Health Security Agenda: Objectives

To accelerate progress toward a world safe and secure from infectious disease threats in partnership with other nations, international organizations and public and private stakeholders, the Global Health Security agenda seeks to:

Prevent Avoidable Epidemics: including naturally occurring outbreaks and intentional or accidental releases by:

- **Preventing the emergence and spread of antimicrobial drug resistant organisms and emerging zoonotic diseases and strengthening international regulatory frameworks governing food safety:** Act to reduce the individual and institutional factors that enable antimicrobial resistance and the emergence of zoonotic disease threats; increase surveillance and early detection of antimicrobial resistant microorganisms and novel zoonotic diseases; measurably enhance antimicrobial stewardship; strengthen supply chains; promote safe practices in livestock production and the marketing of animals; and promote the appropriate and responsible use of antibiotics in all settings, including developing strategies to improve food safety;
- **Promoting national biosafety and biosecurity systems:** Promote the development of specific multi-sectoral approaches in countries and regions for managing biological materials to support diagnostic, research and biosurveillance activities, including identifying, securing, safely monitoring and storing dangerous pathogens in a minimal number of facilities while advancing global biosurveillance, and frameworks to advance safe and responsible conduct; and
- **Reducing the number and magnitude of infectious disease outbreaks:** Establish effective programs for vaccination against epidemic-prone diseases and nosocomial infection control.

Detect Threats Early: including detecting, characterizing, and transparently reporting emerging biological threats early through real-time biosurveillance, by:

- **Launching, strengthening and linking global networks for real-time biosurveillance:** Promote the establishment of monitoring systems that can predict and identify infectious disease threats; interoperable, networked information-sharing platforms and bioinformatic systems; and networks that link to regional disease detection hubs;
- **Strengthening the global norm of rapid, transparent reporting and sample sharing in the event of health emergencies of international concern:** Strengthen capabilities for accurate and transparent reporting to the WHO, OIE, and FAO during emergencies, with rapid sample and reagent sharing between countries and international organizations;
- **Developing and deploying novel diagnostics and strengthen laboratory systems:** Strengthen country and regional capacity at the point-of-care and point-of-need to enable accurate, timely collection and analysis of information, and laboratory systems capable of safely and accurately detecting all major dangerous pathogens with minimal biorisk; and
- **Training and deploying an effective biosurveillance workforce:** Build capacity for trained and functioning biosurveillance workforce, with trained disease detectives and laboratory scientists.

Respond Rapidly and Effectively to biological threats of international concern by:

- **Developing an interconnected global network of Emergency Operations Centers and multi-sectoral response to biological incidents:** Promote establishment of Emergency Operations Centers; trained, functioning, multi-sectoral rapid response teams, with access to a real-time information system; and capacity to attribute the source of an outbreak; and
- **Improving global access to medical and non-medical countermeasures during health emergencies:** Strengthen capacity to produce or procure personal protective equipment, medications, vaccines, and technical expertise, as well as the capacity to plan for and deploy non-medical countermeasures. Strengthen policies and operational frameworks to share public and animal health and medical personnel and countermeasures with partners.