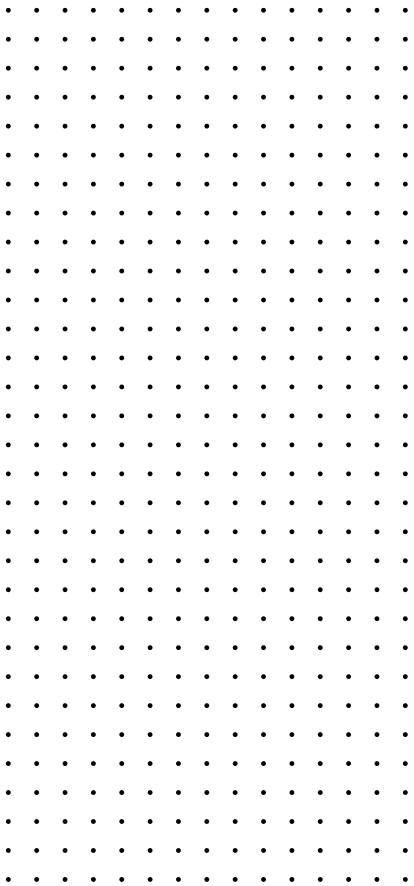


FIGHT FOR WHAT COUNTS.

Thematic Report

Pandemic Preparedness and Response





The challenge

In 2022, the world faces unprecedented global health challenges. COVID-19 continues to cause huge loss of life, human suffering and economic and social disruption across the world. Hard-won gains against HIV, tuberculosis (TB) and malaria are being reversed, with devastating consequences for the poorest and most vulnerable communities. Climate change and increasing conflict and displacement are affecting the epidemiology of existing diseases and facilitating the emergence of new ones.

It is not a question of if we will face the next pandemic threat, but when. With population growth and climate change putting increasing stress on the global ecosystem, we will likely see more zoonotic spillover events, where pathogens from the animal world become threats to humans. Through antimicrobial resistance (AMR), we face an increasing risk of being confronted with pathogenic threats impervious to lifesaving medical tools, such as

antibiotics. We already see this with drug-resistant TB – a growing global threat that is one of the leading causes of death from AMR.

A key lesson from COVID-19 is that the world has significantly underinvested in pandemic preparedness. The G20 High Level Independent Panel (HLIP) and the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness (IPPR) are among those that have produced reports¹ arguing for a significant increase in global investment to strengthen our collective capabilities to prevent, detect and respond to such threats. COVID-19 is more than a wake-up call. It is an emphatic message that continuing to fail to invest in pandemic preparedness puts the whole world at risk.



At Preah Norodom Primary School in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, members of the Student Council check the temperatures of their classmates before they enter the school compound.

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Cover photo: The Global Fund/Atul Loke/Panos

¹ <https://pandemic-financing.org/>;
<https://theindependentpanel.org/>

Our response

The Global Fund was created 20 years ago to fight what were then the deadliest pandemics confronting humanity: HIV and AIDS, TB and malaria. Since then, our unique partnership has saved 44 million lives and cut the death rates from the three diseases by more than half. Together, we have proven that with science, adequate resources and effective global collaboration, we can force even the deadliest diseases into retreat. Today, we are the world's largest multilateral organization fighting the world's deadliest pandemics: HIV, TB, malaria and now COVID-19. As the largest multilateral provider of grants in global health and the only multilateral agency specifically created to fight pandemics, the Global Fund partnership is uniquely placed to collaborate with partners to support countries to prevent, prepare for and respond to pandemics.



A lab technician at B.Y.L. Nair Charitable Hospital in Mumbai, India, prepares a chip with a sample used for COVID-19 diagnosis using the state-of-the-art TrueNat platform, which allows bidirectional testing for both COVID-19 and TB.

The Global Fund/Atul Loke/Panos

Resilient and sustainable systems for health: the foundation for pandemic preparedness

Twenty years of experience have proven that the swiftest and surest way to defeat today's infectious diseases as well as prevent, prepare for, and respond to future pandemics is by building strong, inclusive formal and community health systems. These systems for health built for the fight against existing diseases including HIV, TB and malaria are critical to making the world battle-ready for the next pandemic. We have seen this during COVID-19: Many low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) used the same laboratories, supply chains, data systems, diagnostics tools, health workers and community systems built to fight HIV, TB and malaria as the foundation of their response to the new pandemic.

The Global Fund is the largest multilateral provider of grants for strengthening systems for health. Over the 2021-2023 funding cycle, we are investing US\$4.9 billion, or US\$1.5 billion a year, in formal and community health systems through our core grants and our COVID-19 response – about one-third of our total investments. While reinforcing countries' preparedness has not before now been an explicit objective, recent studies, including in *The Lancet* in February 2021,² have found that over one-third of Global Fund investments to fight HIV, TB and malaria already contribute to health security and pandemic preparedness. Figure 1 below lists the core components of formal and community health systems already funded through Global Fund grants that also contribute significantly to pandemic preparedness, supporting countries to prepare for, prevent, detect and respond to new outbreaks.

The Global Fund is the largest multilateral provider of grants for strengthening systems for health.

² [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X\(20\)30420-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(20)30420-4/fulltext)

**Figure 1:
Global Fund Investments in Formal and
Community Health Systems Are the Foundation
for Pandemic Preparedness and Response**



PREPARE

- Strengthen procurement, logistics & supply chains
- Train and expand the health workforce, including community health workers
- Reinforce health infrastructure, facilities and equipment
- Expand health management information systems including quality real-time data
- Scale up and strengthen community and civil society systems
- Establish integrated, people-centered delivery of health services
- Build resilience of HIV, TB and malaria programs to future threats
- Strengthen equity, gender and human rights approaches
- Support national disease and emergency response plans

PREVENT

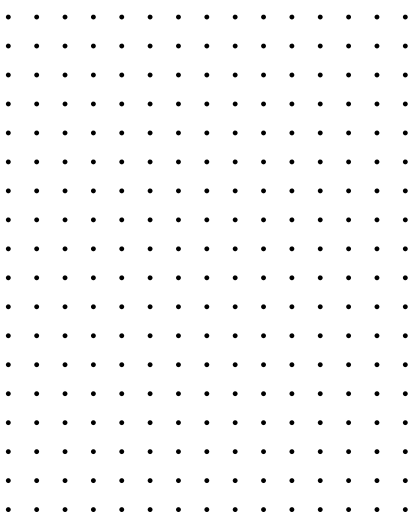
- Fight antimicrobial resistance (AMR), drug and insecticide resistance
- Invest in, and accelerate uptake of, innovation and new tools
- Protect front-line health workers and communities with personal protective equipment
- Fund integrated disease surveillance and response programs
- Support pathogen specimen transport through lab systems
- Connect health systems strengthening to zoonotic disease prevention and detection
- Reduce stigma and discrimination to increase prevention, testing and treatment

DETECT

- Strengthen laboratory systems and diagnostics capacity
- Invest in diagnostics machines that test for multiple pathogens, i.e., HIV, TB and COVID-19
- Train laboratory workers
- Support supranational reference laboratories that support multiple countries
- Strengthen disease surveillance systems, including health management information systems
- Expand digital tools for community health workers to record data in remote areas
- Scale up and integrate the capacity of community systems for detection and response

RESPOND

- Build on COVID-19 Response Mechanism experience for future pandemic response
- Support innovative approaches to continue HIV, TB and malaria programs
- Rapidly deploy commodities via the Pooled Procurement Mechanism and wambo.org
- Mobilize communities to provide information and address misinformation and barriers
- Support community systems to reach key and vulnerable populations
- Deploy Emergency Fund in response to localized disease outbreaks or crises



For example, fully equipped laboratories and trained laboratory technicians diagnose existing diseases like HIV and TB, and they can be rapidly mobilized to respond to new threats. The same diagnostics machines used to test for TB were repurposed to also test for COVID-19, enabling countries like India and Bangladesh to test for both diseases at once. The same community health workers trained to deliver HIV, TB and malaria services also serve as the first line of defense to prevent, detect and respond to new disease outbreaks. Most of our investments in health and community systems make a direct contribution to fundamental pillars of pandemic preparedness.

Our new Strategy, “Fighting Pandemics and Building a Healthier and More Equitable World,” recognizes that we have an important role in making the world safer from future pandemic threats. By making pandemic preparedness an integral part of our new Strategy, the Global Fund will scale up investments in the key components of resilient and sustainable systems for health (RSSH) that are both critical to ending HIV, TB and malaria and to reinforcing pandemic preparedness. In this way, we are maximizing the impact of every dollar.



Amref Health Africa/Kennedy Musyoka

Case Study Supporting Community Health Workers

The crucial role community health workers play as guardians of community health has come into clear focus in the fight against COVID-19 across Africa and beyond. Over the years, community health workers have led the fight against killers such as malaria, HIV and TB. There are more than 2 million community health workers in the countries where the Global Fund

invests, mainly serving rural and hard-to-reach populations. The ability to train and deploy community health workers rapidly, the trust that communities place in them, and their presence in areas with few resources make them a vital part of systems for health and pandemic preparedness and response in many low- and middle-income countries.

The Global Fund needs at least US\$18 billion

This year, the Global Fund is launching our Seventh Replenishment resource mobilization campaign to raise at least US\$18 billion to fight HIV, TB and malaria and build stronger systems for health, and thus reinforce pandemic preparedness. With an investment of US\$18 billion, the Global Fund can play an important role in pandemic preparedness, leveraging our unique advantages and distinctive experience in fighting the deadliest infectious diseases.

Based on analysis for our Seventh Replenishment [Investment Case](#), we estimate that approximately one-third of the US\$18 billion – US\$6 billion – will reinforce systems for health and pandemic preparedness by supporting health care workers; strengthening laboratories, diagnostics tools, supply chain management, information and financial systems; tackling AMR, including drug-resistant TB; reinforcing community systems; and accelerating the shift toward patient-centered, differentiated models of care (which is also critical for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3: Health and well-being for all). These funds – which will represent a significant increase in our current investments – will support countries to strengthen their preparedness for future pandemics.

However, a US\$6 billion level of investment would not fully meet LMICs' resource needs for pandemic preparedness. In line with our new Strategy, we will look to secure additional resources from new sources or financing mechanisms that may result from ongoing global discussions about how to protect the world from future disease threats.

Our ability to create synergies across disease-specific interventions will be critical to building pandemic preparedness efforts in a people-centered, integrated and cost-effective way. Such an integrated approach will not only be smart and swift to build, but it will also ensure that the systems we create have composite demand. Countries can create fungible capacities – resources that are readily changeable to adapt to new situations – that can be used for HIV, TB, malaria and other diseases in times without an immediate health threat and could be repurposed to counter any new pandemic. Such an approach also has the benefit of ensuring that the capacities required to prevent, detect and respond to future pandemics are constantly being used. Like muscles, health system capabilities and infrastructure to prevent, detect and respond to threats will be most effective if exercised, rather than left idle.

With an investment of US\$18 billion, the Global Fund can play an important role in pandemic preparedness.

Pandemic response: the COVID-19 Response Mechanism and the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-Accelerator)

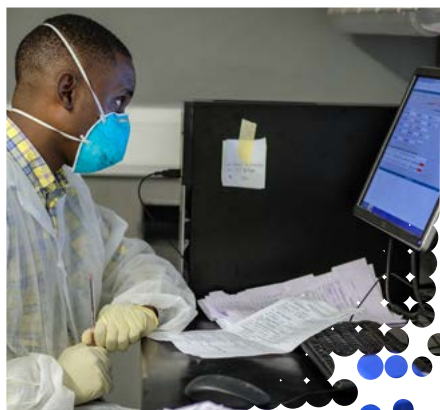
Through the Global Fund's COVID-19 Response Mechanism (C19RM) and our leadership in the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-Accelerator), we have also demonstrated the effectiveness of the Global Fund as a mechanism for pandemic response. In March 2020, the Global Fund immediately made available up to US\$500 million through grant flexibilities to support countries to protect lifesaving HIV, TB and malaria programs and respond to COVID-19. A month later, we launched C19RM to provide further support to countries to respond to the pandemic, mitigate the impact on programs to fight HIV,

TB, and malaria and urgently reinforce systems for health. As of April 2022, total support to countries' COVID-19 responses through C19RM and grant flexibilities amounted to more than US\$4.3 billion across 108 countries and 22 multicountry programs. C19RM has been one of the most transparent, inclusive and swiftest components of the entire global response to COVID-19.

The Global Fund also played a key role in the creation of the ACT-Accelerator and continues to play a leadership role in this groundbreaking global coalition to accelerate the development, equitable distribution and effective deployment of the tools

to fight COVID-19, including vaccines, tests, treatments (including oxygen) and personal protective equipment (PPE). Through the ACT-Accelerator and C19RM, the Global Fund works with partners, such as the World Health Organization, Unitaaid, the Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND), the World Bank and UNICEF. According to the latest figures, C19RM delivered 62% of the funds channeled through ACT-Accelerator partners for tests, treatments (including oxygen), PPE and to strengthen health and community systems, making the Global Fund the largest provider of funding to LMICs for everything other than vaccines.

Case Study Strengthening Laboratories and Surveillance Networks



The Global Fund/Jiro Ose

Uganda has been able to successfully tackle COVID-19 by swiftly deploying health systems and community responses created to fight other infectious diseases, including HIV, TB and malaria. A robust network of laboratories and surveillance systems combined with well-trained human resources, including over 150 trained field epidemiologists spread all over the country, enabled the successful rollout of testing, which is the first line of defense against COVID-19 and any future infectious disease outbreak.



As witnessed with the COVID-19 pandemic, emerging diseases have a high potential to reverse the gains realized in the fight against HIV, TB and malaria. There is a need to establish and maintain global health security. We need to step up and write another chapter in the story of deadly infectious diseases.

**Uganda's Minister of Health
Dr. Jane Ruth Aceng**

Case Study Testing for Multiple Diseases at Once

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit Bangladesh, the country quickly adapted existing health resources built to fight TB to also fight COVID-19. Global Fund investments supported the distribution of personal protective equipment for health workers and community volunteers, the integration of COVID-19 messages into TB campaigns as well as an increase in the number of community outreach events, including family and community counseling, collection of samples and

referrals. Bangladesh also introduced simultaneous TB and COVID-19 testing using GeneXpert diagnostics machines at 71 sites along with rapid antigen testing across the country. Testing was further bolstered by introducing sample transportation boxes for field staff and by establishing sample collection booths in areas with a high concentration of people with TB symptoms.

Why the Global Fund

Given our scale, inclusive operating model and focus on the biggest infectious diseases, plus our relentless focus on outcomes, the Global Fund partnership is uniquely positioned to support countries to design and implement programs that simultaneously fight HIV, TB and malaria and prepare for future pandemics. We are the largest multilateral provider of grants to reinforce formal health systems and support community systems to ensure no one is left behind. We are the largest multilateral agency fighting HIV, TB and malaria – and now COVID-19. Our unique partnership brings together governments, civil society, people affected by the diseases, multilateral and technical partners, and the private sector.

We have over 20 years of expertise and experience, strong accountability and independent oversight mechanisms, and an inclusive governance structure.

The Global Fund is also highly cost effective. Through leveraging economies of scale, working with partners and negotiating directly with manufacturers, we have driven down prices for treatments and medical supplies, including COVID-19 tests. For example, we have helped reduce the price of antigen rapid diagnostic tests to US\$1 per test, from US\$5 in 2020. Our Pooled Procurement Mechanism and online procurement portal, wambo.org, make quality-assured medicines and health commodities available at a reduced price to countries and partners. Through disciplined cost control and economies of scale, we continue to keep our operating expenses low while improving and expanding the scope of our work. The Global Fund's operating expenditure as a percentage of donor contributions is now 5.1% – significantly below most comparable organizations. For C19RM, this percentage is below 3%, reflecting the way we have leveraged the Global Fund's core infrastructure and processes for the COVID-19 response.

We are the largest multilateral agency fighting HIV, TB and malaria.

Case Study

Strengthening Civil Society Groups to Ensure No One Is Left Behind



Fighting stigma and discrimination is critical to ensure everyone, everywhere has access to the health services they need, particularly key and vulnerable populations. Kiki, a transgender woman in Yaoundé, Cameroon, is the founding president of [Positive Vision Cameroon](#), an organization that works to protect the rights of transgender people, including their right to access health care such as HIV prevention and treatment services. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Kiki and her colleagues continued to support the community during lockdowns, including delivering medicines and food door-to-door to people most in need while providing counseling sessions and mental health support. Such a community-led response is a crucial element of systems for health and pandemic preparedness.

The Global Fund/
Kemdongmo Djeufo Emmanuel



FIGHT FOR WHAT COUNTS.

We can end AIDS, TB and malaria as public health threats by 2030 and make the world safer from future threats by strengthening systems for health and thus reinforcing pandemic preparedness. Because our work in these two areas is interconnected and overlapping, investments through the Global Fund have a multiplier effect: Contributing to the fight against HIV, TB and malaria also contributes to health systems resilience and pandemic preparedness, and vice versa. Now is the moment to fight today's infectious diseases and prepare for tomorrow's pandemics. Now is the moment to fight for what counts.

About the Global Fund

The Global Fund invests more than US\$4 billion a year to defeat HIV, TB and malaria and ensure a healthier, safer, equitable future for all. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have invested an additional US\$4.3 billion to fight the new pandemic and reinforce systems for health. We unite the world to find solutions that have the most impact, and we take them to scale worldwide. It's working. Together, we have saved 44 million lives. We won't stop until the job is finished.