USAID's Global Health Security Program

Strategic Framework
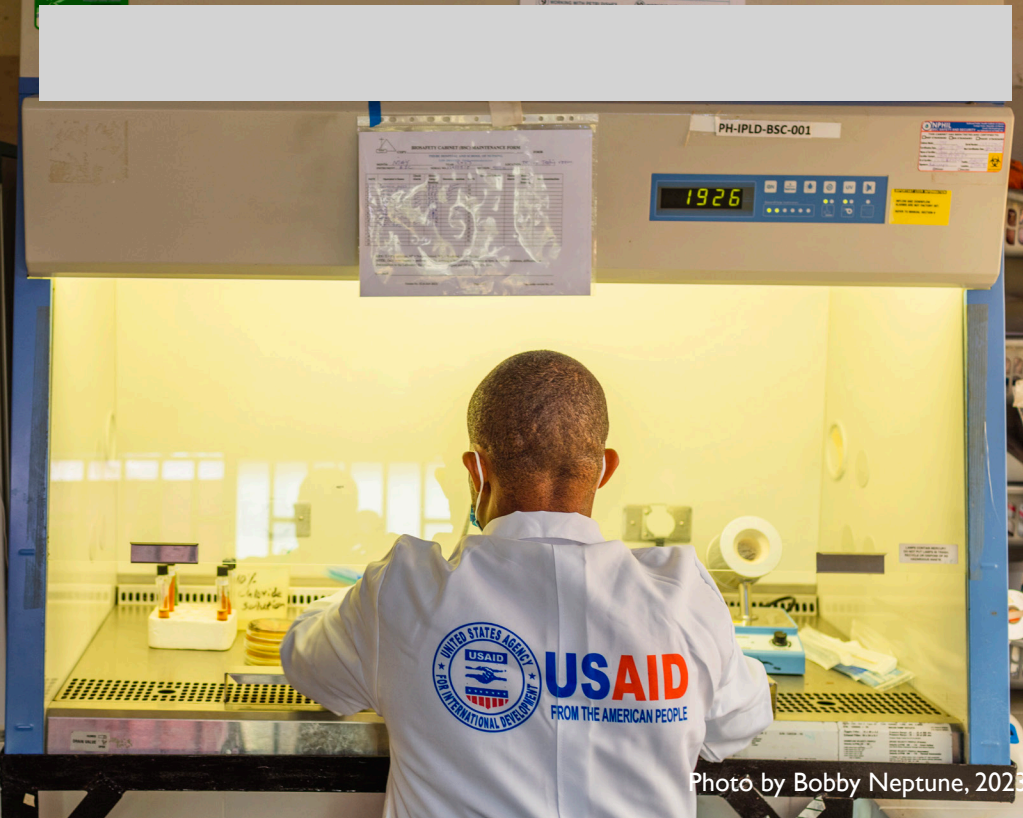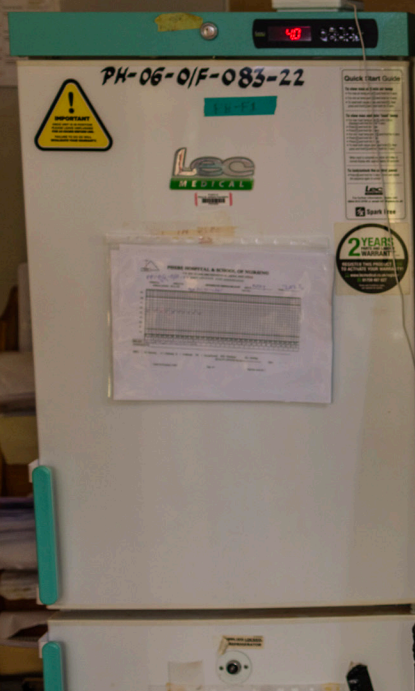
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Photo by Bobby Neptune, 2023

I. Introduction

USAID's Global Health Security (GHS) Program seeks to prevent, detect and respond to infectious disease threats.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Global Health Security (GHS) Program seeks to prevent and mitigate the increasing occurrence and severity of epidemics, pandemics and other emerging infectious disease threats. We do this by partnering with countries to strengthen specific, prioritized GHS capacities in each country, as well as providing regional and global technical leadership. These GHS partnerships build and strengthen measurable, sustainable capacity to prevent, rapidly detect, effectively respond to, and ultimately recover from emerging infectious disease threats – whether naturally occurring, accidental, or deliberate. Recognizing the connection between the health of the environment, animals and people, USAID achieves these goals by implementing the One Health[1] approach. Our GHS program also seeks to bolster the global health security architecture and builds resilience in concert with USAID's broader global health and development programs.

This USAID Global Health Security (GHS) Strategic Framework provides an overview of the vision, goal, objectives, and guiding principles of the USAID GHS Program and serves as a resource for USAID Missions and partners as they develop and refine their GHS portfolios. This Framework reflects guiding U.S. Government and international strategies and policies related to GHS, while providing details on USAID's areas of focus and strategic approach to achieving our goals and objectives. This Framework builds on USAID's successes and lessons learned over the last twenty years of investments in global health security and charts the way forward to maximize and continue our progress in building the core health security capacities that are needed to pre-empt, identify and contain outbreaks before they become epidemics or pandemics.

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1   One Health is a collaborative, multisectoral, and transdisciplinary approach—working at the local, regional, national, and global levels—with the goal of achieving results that recognize the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and their shared environment.

Strategic Framework

MISSION: A world safe from emerging infectious disease, epidemic and pandemic threats

VISION: Strengthened global, regional, country, and local health security capacities to better prevent, prepare for, rapidly detect, and effectively respond to and mitigate the impact of infectious diseases, antimicrobial resistance and other such epidemic and pandeic threats.

OBJECTIVES: Reliable systems that;

1	2	3	4
PREVENT avoidable outbreaks	**DETECT** threats early	**RESPOND** to and mitigate outbreaks reapidly and effectively	**REINFORCE & STRENGTHEN** GHS architecture

II. Background: Global Health Security Context

An Emerging Infectious Disease Threat Anywhere Is a Threat Everywhere

Since the start of the 21st century, infectious disease outbreaks and epidemics have become more frequent and severe across the globe, including influenza, Ebola, and COVID-19. The vast majority – 75 percent – of all new and emerging human infectious diseases originate in animals ("zoonotic")[2]. As population growth, urbanization, globalization, climate change, agricultural intensification and livestock production, destruction of wildlife habitats, and the harvesting of wild species increase, people are in closer contact with animals in many new ways. Increasing rates of contact facilitate the spillover and spillback of pathogens between animal and human populations. Meanwhile, the interconnectedness and speed of 21st century travel means that any pathogen can travel from a remote area to urban centers on any continent within 36 hours[3]. Every country remains vulnerable to infectious disease threats, and infectious disease outbreaks do not respect national boundaries.

Being able to prevent and curb infectious disease and related threats, such as antimicrobial resistance (AMR), is a challenge of global concern. Outbreaks impact every sector of society — public health systems, economies, education systems, food security, and democratic governance.

A Whole of Government Approach to Global Health Security: Alignment with U.S. Government Foreign Policy and National Security Priorities

USAID's global health security investments help prevent new and emerging health threats from reaching the United States, while also promoting economic and political stability in the U.S. and around the world. Outbreaks are best contained as close to the source of the outbreak as possible, and real-world events as well as predictive modeling demonstrate that the countries where USAID has GHS investments are among the leading hotspots for emerging infectious disease threats. The COVID-19 pandemic and recent outbreaks of Ebola, mpox, and avian influenza show that when outbreaks become widespread, they can not only cause loss of life, but also political, economic and social instability. USAID's presence in more than 50 countries with personnel and partners gives us a global footprint – a protective network of nodes – with wide reaching coverage in areas most likely to see new and emerging infectious disease threats emerge. This footprint puts USAID on the frontlines of strengthening the local, national and regional capacities needed to prepare for, prevent and detect pandemic threats, and to rapidly mobilize a response when necessary.

USAID is the world's leading international development agency with a depth of multi-sectoral development expertise. This experience uniquely positions USAID to contribute to effective and sustainable health security capacities. USAID aligns its GHS Program with the U.S. Government's foreign policy priorities and U.S. Government-wide GHS and biodefense strategies. USAID works hand-in-hand with other U.S. Government departments and agencies to further strengthen global health security capacity abroad, including through close collaboration with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Global Health Security and Diplomacy; the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, including the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and National Institutes of Health (NIH); the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD); the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA); and others.

2   Jones, Kate E., et al. "Global trends in emerging infectious diseases." Nature 451.7181 (2008): 990-993.
3   World Health Organization. (2016). International Health Regulations (2005), 3rd ed. World Health Organization. https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/246107

The USAID GHS Strategic Framework is guided by The U.S. 2024 Global Health Security Strategy (GHSS)[4] which is an update to the 2019 Global Health Security Strategy[5]. The GHSS articulates a whole-of-government, science-based approach to strengthening global health sercurity. It places country-driven action at its core to ensure the world is better prepared to prevent and respond to health emergencies, including pandemics. USAID's global health security efforts contribute to each of the three goals of the GHSS: (1) Strengthen Global Health Security Capacities through Bilateral Partnerships; (2) Catalyze Political Commitment, Financing, and Leadership to Achieve Health Security; and (3) Increase Linkages Between Health Security and Complementary Programs to Maximize Impact. The GHSS formalizes the commitment laid out in the National Biodefense Strategy and Implementation Plan (NBS)[6] to work in direct partnership with 50 countries (called GHS partner countries) and provide catalytic leadership alongside multilateral partners to increase international commitments to support at least 50 additional countries. USAID's bilateral GHS programs are operational in every GHS partnership country, a foundational com-ponent of the U.S. Government 50-country commitment. USAID's GHS Program is also aligned with key U.S. Government strategies and initiatives, including the NBS and the National Action Plan for Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria (CARB)[7]. USAID's GHS Program is also aligned with international frameworks including The World Organisation of Animal Health Standards[8], The Quadripartite One Health Joint Plan of Action[9], and The International Health Regulations (IHR)[10], which require all States Parties to develop certain core public health capacities related to "the capacity to detect, assess, notify and report events" and "the capacity to respond promptly and effectively to public health risks and public health emergencies of international concern, including a pandemic emergency.

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4   https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Global-Health-Security-Strategy-2024-1.pdf

6   See the National Biodefense Strategy and Implementation Plan for Countering Biological Threats, Enhancing Pandemic Preparedness, and Achieving Global Health Security,: https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/National-Biodefense-Strategy-and-Implementation-Plan-Final.pdf

7   See National Action Plan for Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria: https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/migrated_legacy_files//196436/CARB-National-Action-Plan-2020-2025.pdf

8   See: https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/standards/

9   World Health Organization, UNEP United Nations Environment Programme, and World Organisation for Animal Health. One health joint plan of action (2022-2026): working together for the health of humans, animals, plants and the environment. World Health Organization, 2022

10   World Health Organization. (2016). International Health Regulations (2005), 3rd ed. World Health Organization. https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/24610

III.USAID's Strategic Approaches to Global Health Security

USAID's GHS Program applies strategic approaches to its GHS investments which serve as a set of fundamental components to promote responsive, sustainable, and country-specific results. These strategic approaches demonstrate how USAID's GHS Program strengthens partner countries' relevant GHS systems and capacities, leverages these capacities for response, and cultivates additional global cooperation and investments.

I. Country-led GHS Programming

Country-led processes are essential for fostering national and local ownership of health security and for promoting sustainable progress toward the GHS goals. The goal of the U.S. Government's GHS work is for partner countries to have full ownership of strong GHS capacities, with political, legislative, and financial support for the programs, human resources, and systems necessary to maintain a high level of health security.

In each country, our global health security teams use a science-based approach to work in strategic partnership with the government to advance their national priorities for strengthening health security systems. The foundation for these partnerships is government-led assessments of their country level GHS capacities through various internationally recognized evaluations processes, such as the Joint External Evaluations (JEE) and Voluntary External Evaluation (VEE) of core IHR capacities, and IHR States Parties Self-Assessment Annual Report (SPAR). The synthesis and analysis of results from these assessments inform the government's prioritization for capacity strengthening through the development of action-oriented plans such as National Action Plans for Health Security (NAPHS); sector specific action plans for AMR; zoonotic disease prioritization; biosafety biosecurity plans; and outbreak response plans or playbooks. USAID GHS objectives and expertise are directly aligned with these country-led plans.

50 U.S. Government GHS Partner Countries: Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, The Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) and member states, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti*, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Moldova, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, The Philippines, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Uganda, Ukraine*, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Zambia

Additional USAID GHS Partner Countries: Azerbaijan, Brazil, Egypt, Laos PDR, Mongolia, Niger, Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA including Thailand), Rwanda, South Africa *when the operating environment allows

USAID prioritizes its GHS investments in eight of the 19 standardized WHO JEE technical focus areas for GHS, taking into account USAID's comparative advantages as well as issues most critical to protect U.S. national security. USAID also provides technical guidance for complementary programming such as wildlife surveillance; strengthening primary prevention and application of nature-based solutions; data analytics and bioinformatics; and support for mitigating risk from other notifiable emerging zoonotic pathogens with epidemic and pandemic potential when requested by country governments.

USAID is also dedicated to "boots on the ground" support for country programming and robust coverage for outbreak response. As part of USAID's support for the NBS and GHSS goals, USAID GHS technical advisors in all GHS partner countries provide support for country-driven processes that identify country-specific needs and establish clear and measurable goals to enhance community capacity and resilience to prevent and mitigate infectious disease threats. USAID's on-the-ground presence in more than 50 countries enables us to continue to build and expand on these critical health security relationships with partner country governments and local stakeholders. USAID provides direct technical assistance and support to countries, empowering them to take ownership of their multi-sectoral health security and medical systems. By strengthening partner countries' capacities, we promote self-reliance, reduce instability and enhance global health security.

USAID works closely with other U.S. Government departments and agencies operating in partner countries to ensure that efforts and investments are complementary and never duplicative. Stopping emerging infectious disease threats at their source is a complex problem that requires sustained collaboration across the U.S. Government to address it. This close collaboration includes coordination amongst interagency health country teams, which produce annual interagency country GHS work-plans reflecting all department and agency activities contributing to

strengthening global health security. Together, these interagency health country teams report on all major U.S. activities that strengthen health security capacities described in the IHR monitoring and evaluation framework tools (JEE and SPAR), regardless of funding source – including relevant activities from other program areas, such as PEPFAR, DOD, TB assistance, relevant NIH efforts, and more.

Finally, USAID's GHS Program stresses the importance of locally led development, consistent with the forthcoming USAID Global Health Policy and recognizing local governments and communities as critical actors required to achieve effective, sustainable local health services and systems[11]. Locally led development is the process in which local actors–encompassing individuals, communities, networks, organizations, private entities, and governments–set their own agendas, develop solutions, and bring the capacity, leadership, and resources to make those solutions a reality. [12]USAID's GHS Program prioritizes local entities for the implementation of country capacity strengthening activities wherever possible. Local leadership is essential to extending impact beyond the national level and delving closer to the communities on the frontlines of infectious disease outbreaks and pandemics. Localization is essential to the long-term sustainability of country capacities, and GHS programs are increasingly implemented by an array of local, indigenous organizations with the technical and organizational capacity to advance health security.

2. Strengthening and Expanding One Health Collaboration

One Health is an integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimize the health of people, animals, and ecosystems. It recognizes that the health of humans, domestic and wild animals, plants, and the wider environment (including ecosystems) are closely linked and interdependent.[13]

One Health is essential to preventing, detecting and responding to emerging infectious disease threats. Activities in the wildlife, livestock, and human health

11   Policy for Global Health Development: Advancing Life Expectancy and Well-Being
12   https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/What_is_Locally_Led_Development_Fact_Sheet.pdf
13   See: https://journals.plos.org/plospathogens/article?id=10.1371/journal.ppat.1010537)

sectors that improve capacity to detect and respond to outbreaks of zoonotic disease—and health events of unknown etiology in animals—can prevent and contain these pathogens at their source, before they spark epidemics and pandemics. Strengthening and expanding One Health collaboration across sectors helps ensure that emerging zoonoses are communicated early and provides opportunities for each sector to leverage the knowledge, skills, and strengths of the other sectors. USAID supports multisectoral and sustainable GHS

University of Zambia students march on World Rabies Day to raise community awareness, a initiative supported by USAID Breakthrough ACTION project. Photo by USAID Breakthough ACTTION/Zambia.

programs, including government inter-ministerial coordination for health security through National One Health Platforms. This includes partnering with various Ministries addressing human, animal, and environmental health, such as Agriculture, Livestock & Fisheries, Environment, in addition to Health Ministries and National Public Health Institutes. As a guiding principle, a One Health approach is a cornerstone across USAID Missions and across lines of efforts, such as food and water insecurity, AMR, pollution, climate change, sustaining biodiversity and mitigating ecosystem degradation, and emerging infectious disease threats with epidemic and pandemic potential.

3. Leveraging Synergies with other US-AID Global Health Initiatives and Investments

USAID's comparative advantage includes historic relationships with development, global health, and humanitarian partners critical to advancing global health

security and pandemic preparedness. All of USAID's global health programs provide a baseline of support for countries to leverage for outbreak preparedness and response objectives: All of USAID's global health programs contribute essential support to achieving GHS objectives, including programs supporting health systems resilience; primary health care; maternal and child health (including immunization) and nutrition; tuberculosis; the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR); the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI); and COVID-19 preparedness and response. USAID's comparative advantage includes historic relationships with development, global health, and humanitarian partners critical to advancing global health security and pandemic preparedness. The GHS Program assesses U.S. Government investments in country programs and builds on is leveraging its expertise and resources to reduce epidemic and pandemic shocks on country health systems, and is linking national and regional initiatives that build horizontal, non-disease specific capacity, such as safe and secure laboratory and disease surveillance systems, public and animal health workforces, and platforms for procuring, deploying and managing countermeasures and personnel in response to health emergencies. All of USAID's global health programs provide a baseline of support for countries that is essential for them to achieve outbreak preparedness and response objectives.

USAID also builds off of our overall development portfolio to address GHS challenges, supporting intersections with democracy, human rights and governance; economic growth and trade; education; biodiversity and conversation; gender equality and women's empowerment; water and sanitation; and crises and conflict. With a One Health approach guiding our work, USAID's country-level relationships with Ministries of Agriculture and beyond can facilitate multisectoral approaches to GHS. Working in synergy across this broad development spectrum, USAID's GHS Program approaches complex and multidimensional health challenges from multiple angles, leading to a greater positive impact on health outcomes than through health programming alone.

4. Climate-sensitive Programming

USAID veterinarians apply One Health approaches to reduce vulnerabilities to climate change and improve nutrition, health, and livlihoods in Chad and across sub-Saharan Africa. Photo by Christine Jost, USAID.

Climate influences the transmission of many infectious diseases, including some of the most significant causes of morbidity and mortality in low- and middle-income countries. Major outbreaks and epidemics may be triggered and amplified by increased disease transmission rates associated with changes in climate conditions. To mitigate this increased threat, the GHS Program is committed to addressing GHS impacts related to climate change through carefully considered program design, implementation and adaptation. The GHS Program will work with our partners on the ground to develop, implement and disseminate research, tools and best practices to prevent climate-sensitive emerging infectious disease threats and respond to outbreaks. Further, the GHS Program will incorporate the USAID's climate risk management process—assessing, addressing, and adaptively managing climate risks—in the design of all programs and strategies to improve their impact and sustainability.[14]

5 Private Sector Engagement

Private Sector Engagement is "a strategic approach to planning and programming through which USAID consults, strategizes, aligns, collaborates, and implements with the private sector for greater scale, sustainability and effectiveness of development or humanitarian

outcomes."[15] Recognizing that the private sector is an essential stakeholder in helping countries achieve sustainable outcomes in global health security, the GHS Program is committed to engaging and leveraging private sector partnerships to help countries move beyond the need for assistance. The GHS Program meets this commitment through development and implementation of innovative, market-driven, and sustainable research and development (R&D) solutions that reduce risk from the spillover of emerging zoonotic pathogens with epidemic and pandemic potential, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and the impact of Transboundary Animal Disease (TADs). Recognizing that human health is intrinsically linked with the health of animals, private sector engagement presents another important avenue to institutionalize best practices in animal production, strengthen animal health, and build resilience to disease threats.

USAID and private-sector partner, Cargill, work together to strengthen safe farming practices in India through the TRANSFORM project. Pictured above, a meeting on biosafety measures aim to keep farm animals healthy, mitigating disease spread. Photo by TRANSFORM/ USAID.

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14   See: https://www.usaid.gov/climate/adaptation

15   https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/usaid_psepolicy_final.pdf

IV. USAID GHS Program Objectives

The following objectives and focus areas will drive GHS results that leverage USAID institutional strengthswere selected to achieve results while providing Missions with flexibility to tailor activities to each partner country's unique set of risk factors, pathogen risk profiles, political system, social structures, existing capacities, and priorities.

1 Prevent	**2** Detect	**1** Respond	**1** Reinforce
USAID GHS Partner countries demonstrate strengthened and sustainable capacity to prepare for, mitigate, and prevent EID, epidemic, and pandemic threats.	Partner countries demonstrate strengthened and sustainable capacity to detect EIDs, AMR, epidemic, and pandemic threats	Partner countries demonstrate strengthened and sustainable capacity to effectively address and rapidly respond to EID, epidemic and pandemic potential threats; and 2) USAID's Outbreak Response Team (ORT) provides direct and rapid outbreak response to countries and communities in need	GHS Architecture: The international GHS architecture is reinforced and strengthened through robust multilateral institutions, an improved policy environment, the development and dissemination of global goods, and advancing knowledge with pandemic preparedness research and innovation.
Focus areas:	**Focus areas:**	**Focus areas:**	
• Zoonotic Disease • Antimicrobial Resistance(AMR) • Biosafety & Biosecurity	• Laboratory Systems • Surveillance • Workforce Development	• RCCE • IPC • Strengthened Outbreak Response Capacities • Surge support from USAID's ORT	Notable partnerships supporting GHS architecture include the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and Pandemic Fund.

I **PREVENTION:** Objective 1

USAID GHS Partner Countries demonstrate strengthened and sustainable capacity to prepare for, mitigate, and prevent new and emerging infectious disease, epidemic, and pandemic threats.

Future pandemics are not inevitable. Pandemics result from a series of biological, ecological, social, behavioral, economic and policy events coupled with breakdowns in the systems meant to address such threats. The risk from new and emerging infectious disease threats is a growing concern, exacerbated by increasingly frequent and expanding interactions between people, animals, and our shared environment. USAID's GHS Program prioritizes programming to prevent or mitigate new and emerging infectious disease threats, including understanding and minimizing AMR and the transmission of zoonotic diseases through coordinated efforts of the animal health, public health, and environment sectors.

USAID collaborates with many partners, organizations, and U.S. Government departments and agencies to bring considerable and unique resources to strengthen health security. USAID's GHS Program works hand-in-hand with partner countries to identify zoonotic disease priorities and address gaps in primary prevention—a critical component of global health security with the greatest potential to protect people, their wellbeing, and livelihoods. USAID Prevention efforts focus on the following lines of effort:

1. Zoonotic Disease:

USAID supports structures that mitigate the risk of zoonotic disease transmission between animal and human populations, a critical step in preventing epidemic and pandemic prone disease threats. GHS programs support multisectoral surveillance centered upon a risk-based ranking of priority zoonoses at the national level. Coordinated surveillance and data integration across human, domestic animal and wildlife sectors enables actionable, evidence-based risk management and is a cornerstone of GHS programming. USAID builds on a legacy of supporting improved animal production and management practices and will continue to deepen One Health collaborations to address

drivers of zoonotic disease and prevent threats from emerging zoonotic pathogens with epidemic and pandemic potential.

2. Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR):

USAID's GHS Program is leading with a One Health approach to address all aspects of AMR, as the risks for human and animal health cannot be fully curbed without addressing the environmental and animal health drivers of AMR. The misuse of antimicrobials in human and animal health, as well as in agricultural production, is a significant driver of AMR. Maintaining equitable and appropriate access to lifesaving and affordable antimicrobials is a critical aspect of prevention. The GHS Program supports activities to document AMR through surveillance of both antimicrobial use and resistant infections, to prevent AMR through antimicrobial stewardship, and to prevent disease and AMR through IPC in healthcare settings and promotion of sanitary animal production and value chain management and practices.

3. Biosafety and Biosecurity:

Preventing new and emerging infectious diseases requires strong biosafety and biosecurity practices. Collecting, handling, packaging, and processing infectious or potentially infectious biological samples are necessary components of any infectious disease program. USAID's GHS Program incorporates training, skills development, and protocols to establish and strengthen biosafety and biosecurity in all aspects of the program across animal and human health systems. Biosafety and biosecurity are particularly relevant to GHS Program activities that involve handling of animals and animal products and in laboratory strengthening activities. These efforts are helping to minimize the threat of lab accidents while building the capacities of labs to safely conduct the testing necessary for early threat detection.

2 DETECTION: Objective 2

Partner countries demonstrate strengthened and sustainable capacity to detect new and emerging infectious diseases, AMR, epidemic, and pandemic threats

Early detection is critical to any infectious disease control program and aligns with USAID's long history of assisting partner countries to strengthen their domestic infectious disease detection capacity. USAID's GHS Program focuses on country capacity needs in early detection, including surveillance, laboratory and point of care diagnostics, data management and analysis, reporting, and information sharing. Lines of effort contributing to effective preparation for and detection of these threats include the following:

1. Laboratory Systems:

The GHS Program works with partner countries to strengthen and maintain a safe and secure national laboratory system capable of accurately detecting and reporting emerging pathogens of epidemic and pandemic potential. These efforts bolster the technical and diagnostic capacity of national and subnational laboratories in partner countries to achieve internationally accepted IHR metrics and effectively prevent, detect, and respond to public health risks and emergencies with epidemic and pandemic potential.

2. Surveillance:

USAID's GHS Program partners with countries to reduce the time it takes to detect new and emerging infectious disease and enhance early warning systems at the global, country, and subnational levels. USAID's GHS Program assists partner countries to understand and prioritize domestic new and emerging infectious disease risks to strengthen their surveillance and early detection systems. The GHS Program works to strengthen surveillance capacity that focuses on priority zoonoses that threaten both animal and human health, including community-based surveillance. As a complement to surveillance activities, the GHS Program supports strengthening data management, including data collection and analysis, and bolstering trusted and secure systems for data sharing. USAID's GHS Program works with partners to establish and strengthen rapid and transparent reporting and early warning through technical data and reporting system

strengthening, risk communication and community engagement to improve trust and communications, and advocacy to strengthen collaboration and leadership.

3. Workforce Development:

A large-scale, multidisciplinary network of health professionals is critical for achieving health security across all our priority areas. USAID's GHS Program assists partner countries to strengthen health work-

USAID supports training programs to build local capacity to advance global health security. Pictured above is a training session through the Southeast Asia One Health university Network, a project aimed at building scalable, sustainable systems that train ad equip human resources. Photo by USAID.

force capacities with a focus on multisectoral, One Health competencies. We work at the national, subnational and local levels with all cadres of health workers, including human, animal, and environmental health professions. USAID's GHS Program supports activities to develop multisectoral strategies that engage human, animal, and environmental health sectors, offering comprehensive training programs throughout the career lifecycle, and preparing for workforce surges during public health events.

3 **RESPONSE:** Objective 3

Partner countries demonstrate strengthened and sustainable capacity to effectively address and rapidly respond to new and emerging infectious disease, epidemic and pandemic potential threats; and 2) USAID's Outbreak Response Team provides direct and rapid outbreak response to countries and communities in need

To better prepare countries to respond to outbreaks, USAID's GHS Program uses a two-pronged approach: First, USAID works with partner countries to strengthen their internal capacities and systems – from community to national levels – for human and animal outbreak readiness. USAID then works with partner countries to leverage those in-country capacities when they are needed to respond to outbreaks. Second, USAID's Outbreak Response Team (ORT) is available to surge direct emergency outbreak response resources to countries when the country's internal capacities are overwhelmed and USAID Missions request additional assistance. The ORT works to improve outbreak response by complementing and supporting USAID Missions through effective coordination, consistent messaging, informed decision making, and strategic alignment of USAID's priorities. USAID's comprehensive, cross-sectoral approach to handling infectious disease outbreaks enables the Agency to provide timely, targeted support and to strengthen local capacity when requested by partner-country governments. (See Operational Framework for USAID Response to Infectious Disease Outbreaks: An Additional Help for ADS Chapter 530 for more information.[16]) USAID helps countries to achieve internationally accepted outbreak response timeliness metrics, including the 7-1-7[17] targets which provide country benchmarks focused on detecting an outbreak within 7 days, notifying health authorities within 1 day to start an investigation, and completing an initial response within 7 days.

Lines of effort contributing to partner countries' outbreak readiness and response include:

1. Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE):

Following a regional mpox outbreak, Burundi utilizes RCCE at a local market to spread awareness about the disease, how it spreads, and how to stay safe. USAID and partners prioritize effective information sharing. Photo by USAID, Burundi.

Improving capacities for multi-sectoral and multifaceted risk communication helps countries promote positive behaviors and respond to health emergencies. A key lesson from the COVID-19 pandemic is that trust in officials and among communities is directly linked to compliance with disease prevention and response guidance. USAID's GHS Program supports the real-time exchange of information, technical advice, and risk communication before, during, and after outbreaks and emergencies. USAID RCCE programming is built on a long-history of critical health and risk communication experience that reaches the community level. This helps establish a foundation of trust so that communities and people have confidence in appropriate and evidence-informed protective and preventive actions. This work is also essential in combating mis- and dis-information, which can distort or impede public health emergency responses.

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16.   Operational Framework for USAID Response to Infectious Disease Outbreaks: An Additional Help for ADS Chapter 530 (https://www.usaid.gov/about-us/agency-policy/series-500/references-chapter/530saa)
17   Resolve to Save Life; See: https://resolvetosavelives.org/prevent-epidemics/7-1-7-early-disease-detection/

2. Infection Prevention and Control (IPC): The GHS Program is working to strengthen IPC activities before, during, and after outbreaks in a range of settings, including healthcare settings, farms and markets, and throughout the animal production value chain. IPC activities help prevent onward infection during outbreaks, reduce the prevalence of pathogens, and protect patients, healthcare workers, animal production workers, and people who are in contact with animals from zoonotic pathogen threats.

In Kenya, antimicrobial stewardship (AMS) works at the local level to strengthen pillars in the fight against AMR. Above, three healthcare workers work together across five pillars of AMS including infection prevention and control, surveillance and behavior change. Photo by Mwangi Kirubi

3. Strengthen Outbreak Response Capacities: In most outbreaks, as a first and often sufficient course of action, countries use their internal systems and resources to address and control the outbreak. This domestic response promotes communication and trust between populations affected by outbreak and response personnel; strengthens skills; and strengthens collaboration among the response personnel at each level and across sectors. Complementing these efforts, the GHS Program brings additional expertise to assist partner countries (at the national and community levels) to achieve GHS outbreak preparedness and response targets. The GHS Program assists partner countries to utilize a One Health approach to enhance their capacities for outbreak risk assessments, rapid investigation of human and animal health alerts, outbreak response management, emergency operation centers, logistics and medical countermea-

sures, emergency supply chains, and post-outbreak assessments to further strengthen future outbreak readiness and response.

4. Surge support from USAID's Outbreak Response Team: The ORT provides direct outbreak response assistance for significant outbreaks in human and animal populations when a country's internal capacity and resources are insufficient and the country requests assistance. The Washington-based ORT maintains a roster of full-time experts as well as pre-positioned resources needed to rapidly assess and respond to country requests for assistance (which come via USAID Mission teams). To help countries respond to infectious disease outbreaks, the ORT provides countries with a range of support on a case by case basis, including technical assistance, resources to support across outbreak technical pillars, deployable staff, and essential commodities.[18]

The ORT coordinates outbreak responses with USAID Mission, U.S. Government departments and agencies, and other partners. In the early stages of an outbreak response, the ORT works with USAID Missions to surge support, including technical assistance and commodities, as requested by the host country. ORT maintains prepositioned funds in WHO, UNICEF, IFRC, and FAO to enable rapid response support to countries who are in need of surge support, as well as emergency commodity stockpiles of personal protective equipment and lab supplies. If a significant outbreak meets necessary criteria, the ORT can request access to USAID's Emergency Reserve Fund.[19]

18   https://scms.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2024-02/CORRECTED%20New%20ORT%20Newsletter.pdf
19   USAID has access to the Emergency Reserve Fund for Infectious Diseases for outbreaks that meet the following conditions: the outbreak is an emerging health threat; the outbreak poses severe threats to human health; and it is in the U.S. national interest to respond. USAID's GHS Program has been key to the global management of COVID-19, Ebola, Marburg, Mpox, and avian influenza outbreak responses.

4 REINFORCE & STRENGTHEN:
Objective 4

GHS Architecture: The international GHS architecture is reinforced and strengthened through robust multilateral institutions, an improved policy environment, the development and dissemination of global goods, and advancing knowledge with pandemic preparedness research and innovation.[20]

The prevent-detect-respond framework must be supported by an architecture of investments and a policy environment that supports global health security, and must be continuously optimized by innovation, improved implementation science, and new research. While USAID focuses the majority of its work and investments on country partnerships that strengthen the prevent-detect-respond framework, USAID also works at the country and regional levels to improve the enabling environment for these critical interventions.

1. Strengthening Multilateral GHS Investments

Global commitment and collaboration is required to build a world safe from new and emerging infectious diseases, and endemic and pandemic threats. USAID's GHS Program engages with multilateral institutions, helping them leverage their respective mandates and expertise, and catalyzing assistance to reach our complementary visions and goals. Multilateral investments help create the enabling environment for change at scale - broadening the reach and impact beyond what we are doing at the bilateral level with USAID Missions. Multilateral investments play an important role in many of the 50+ countries where we work and contribute to U.S. Government commitments under the Global Health Security Strategy.[21] Our multilateral support complements and reinforces our bilateral work and promotes efficient, effective, coordinated international action, giving USAID Missions the ability to leverage those investments at a country level to improve coverage and impact of key interventions.

2. Specifically, USAID's GHS Program supports the following multilateral institutions to strengthen the GHS architecture:

The Pandemic Fund: The Pandemic Fund finances critical investments to strengthen pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response capacities in low- and middle-income countries. The Pandemic Fund provides a unique opportunity for USAID's GHS Program to leverage its resources further and faster through alignment between USAID bilateral programming and Pandemic Fund activities. Pandemic Fund grants contribute towards the U.S. Government's "catalytic 50" goal, providing both direct resources and unlocking additional resources via co-financing and co-investment by both recipients and implementing entities.

The Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI): USAID's partnership with CEPI advances global health security with a focus on developing vaccines and therapeutics for pathogens with epidemic or pandemic potential, strengthening research and development and manufacturing capacities, and ensuring equitable access to medical countermeasures during crises.

The Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA)[22]: Launched in 2014 by the United States, and led by the CDC and WHO, the initiative began as a five-year multilateral effort to accelerate implementation of the

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20   GHS Architecture: The framework of institutions, organizations, policies, and measures to address and respond to GHS threats. Key components of the GHS architecture include the multilateral organizations responsible for monitoring and responding to global health threats, coordinating international health efforts, providing technical assistance, and setting global health standards and regulations; the International Health Regulations (IHR); global health initiatives and partnerships; national and regional health systems; surveillance and early warning systems; research and development for vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics; international coordination and collaboration; capacity building; financing, etc. Source: https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Global-Health-Security-Strategy-2024-1.pdf
21   See the Global Health Security Strategy: https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Global-Health-Security-Strategy-2024-1.pdf

22   See the Global Health Security Agenda: https://globalhealthsecurityagenda.org/

International Health Regulations (IHR) with a focus on resource-poor countries. The U.S. Government's continued commitment to achieving the GHSA 2024 priorities are reflected in the body of the U.S. Government's GHS strategies.

World Health Assembly: The GHS Program leads USAID's participation in the World Health Assembly negotiations to amend the IHR and draft a Pandemic Accord. The IHR – and potentially a future Pandemic Accord – form the internationally agreed-upon framework of obligations for how countries prevent, prepare for, detect, and respond to pandemics and health emergencies.

UN FAO, WHO, UNEP, WOAH Quadripartite: As a core component of GHS programming, multi-sectoral engagement through the Quadripartite organizations advances prevention, detection and response capacities; strengthens human, animal and environmental health systems; and expands the reach and impact of GHS programs.

3. Advancing Knowledge with Research and Innovation:

As the U.S. Government's dedicated international development agency, USAID plays a unique role in ensuring that scientific breakthroughs and cross-cutting best practices find applicability and sustainability in low-and-middle income countries. USAID plays a critical role in promoting U.S. interests abroad by investing in research and development that has led to essential breakthroughs in prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of global diseases. The USAID Scientific Research Strategy[23] outlines policies that guide research at USAID, allowing the Agency to inform policy, chart strategic direction of programs, and overcome barriers to implementation. USAID's GHS Program invests in innovations that will catalyze technologies and groundbreaking solutions to overcome intractable challenges, yielding improved efficacy and reduced cost of prevention, detection, and response to threats from emerging infectious disease threats with epidemic and pandemic potential.

USAID's GHS current implementation science activities include, but are not limited to: partnering with the private sector to support locally-led research on the potential of animal feed additives to reduce the

burden from emerging zoonotic pathogens with epidemic and pandemic potential and minimize the need for antibiotic interventions; development of risk-based spillover maps enabling targeted risk mitigation; and wastewater surveillance guidance for target pathogens.

Additionally, USAID supports research and innovation through its investment in CEPI. CEPI funds enabling science activities to accelerate the development of safe and effective vaccines, bolsters global manufacturing capacity in underserved regions, and harnesses innovative technologies to improve the speed, scale and access of vaccine manufacturing in response to epidemic and pandemic threats. This includes support for the development of 30+ vaccine candidates for its priority pathogens, overseeing a number of breakthroughs, including the first-ever approved Chikungunya vaccine and advancing the first-ever Nipah and Lassa vaccines into Phase I trials.

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23   https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/GH-14%20USAID%20Global%20Health%20R%26amp%3BD%20Strategy.pdf

V. Impact and Measurement

In Liberia, laboratory technician William Walker tests samples at the Phebe Laboratory through USAID supported lab strengthening projects. Photo by Bobby Neptune

USAID's GHS Program contributes to the United States' commitment to assist at least 50 countries and use catalytic leadership to work with key donors and partners to support at least 50 additional countries to achieve "Demonstrated Capacity" (80% of achievement on the IHR monitoring scale) or comparable level in at least five technical areas critical to the country (as measured by relevant health security assessments such as the JEE).

USAID works towards these goals by investing in activities that strengthen specific GHS technical areas, and then supporting partner countries to conduct regular evaluations of their GHS capacities (e.g. JEE, VEE, and/or SPAR). USAID also builds out country-level, custom indicators that enable USAID to track progress on specific USAID-supported activities. Finally, USAID supports countries to achieve interna-

tionally accepted outbreak response timeliness metrics, such as the 7-1-7 targets (detecting an outbreak within seven days, notifying health authorities within one day to start an investigation, and completing an initial response within seven days.)

USAID's GHS investments are working. The JEE priority areas invested in by USAID have demonstrated measurable improvement over time, yielding greater gains than many of the technical areas without USAID investments. For example, of the 25 long-standing GHS partner countries[24], 21 have reported improvements above baseline levels in at least five GHS capacity areas, including major gains in zoonotic disease, surveillance, & risk communication and community engagement. USAID targets its investments in specific GHS capacity areas that have historically scored the lowest in each country. Sustaining bilateral investments in global health security are needed to maintain this progress.

24   Long-standing GHS partner countries are defined as partner countries with at least two years of USAID GHS support

VI. Looking Forward

Climate, demographic, conflict, and technological changes are driving increased incidence and impact of outbreaks. These trends are increasing the likelihood that epidemics and pandemics will occur. Acute outbreaks are emerging alongside record-breaking levels of global spread of known threats, including cholera, dengue, and malaria.

Disease outbreaks pose a threat to U.S. national security, as well as global economic stability. It is in the United States' and our partner countries' interest to ensure that USAID continues to : 1) strengthen and sustain capacity to prepare for, mitigate, and prevent new and emerging infectious disease, epidemic, and pandemic threats; 2) strengthen and sustain capacity to detect new and emerging infectious diseases, AMR, epidemic, and pandemic threats; 3) strengthen and sustain capacity to effectively address and rapidly respond to new and emerging infectious disease, epidemic and pandemic potential threats; and 4) reinforce and strengthen, through robust multilateral institutions, an improved policy environment, the development and dissemination of global goods, and the advancement of knowledge with pandemic preparedness research and innovation.

While we have made progress since emerging from the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, continued investment of financial, political, and technical resources is needed to ensure success in building stronger preparedness today, sustainability of those efforts, and resilience to future emerging infectious disease threats. Success in these efforts will not only make Americans and our partners around the world safer, it will also reduce international reliance on U.S. resources and expertise during times of crisis.