

U.S. COVID-19 GLOBAL RESPONSE AND RECOVERY FRAMEWORK

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

More than 600,000 of our fellow Americans, and nearly 4 million people globally, have died due to COVID-19. The devastating impact of the pandemic has been felt at home and abroad, triggering health and economic crises. Globally, we are witnessing the first wide scale increase in extreme poverty in more than twenty years, the loss of decades of development progress, increases in gender-based violence, rising food insecurity, and increased unemployment—particularly among young people and women. Even as we gain confidence in United States (U.S.) domestic COVID-19 vaccination coverage, none of us are safe until all of us are safe. The risk of emergent, dangerous variants where COVID-19 transmission remains high poses a risk to us all. This disease knows no borders.

The U.S. will work with our partners to intensify the fight against COVID-19 around the world, pave the way to global recovery, and build back better national and global health security. Our first goal is to end the pandemic—at home and abroad. On January 21, 2021, President Biden released the *National Strategy for the COVID-19 Response and Pandemic Preparedness*, including Goal 7, which details the Biden-Harris Administration’s comprehensive plan restore U.S. leadership globally and build better preparedness for future threats; re-engage with the World Health Organization (WHO) and seek to strengthen and reform it; urge the international COVID-19 public health and humanitarian response; restore U.S. leadership to the international COVID-19 response and advance global health security and diplomacy; and build better biopreparedness and expand resilience for biological threats.

In support of that strategy, the *U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework*¹ provides a focused set of objectives and lines of effort under which U.S. departments of agencies are executing a whole-of-government response. This response aims to shorten the lifespan of and ultimately end the COVID-19 pandemic globally; mitigate its wider harms to people and economies and support the global recovery; and build back better to strengthen international readiness for future biological threats. The U.S. Government will pursue five objectives under the *U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework* that together constitute a comprehensive approach to managing the immediate global health crisis and ending the pandemic.

The U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework also supports U.S. commitments to the *G7+ Plan to Defeat the COVID-19 Pandemic in 2022 and Prevent the Next Pandemic*² by supporting vaccination of the world’s most vulnerable populations, supporting last mile vaccination and getting shots in arms, providing personal protective equipment (PPE) and medical supplies where needed, strengthening supply, improving disease surveillance and early warning, supporting recovery, building resilience, and advancing global health security.

¹ The *Response and Recovery Framework* aligns with the *National Security Memorandum on United States Global Leadership to Strengthen the International COVID-19 Response and to Advance Global Health Security and Biological Preparedness* (NSM-1), the *Interim National Security Strategic Guidance*, and the broader *National Strategy for the COVID-19 Response and Pandemic Preparedness*.

² <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/06/11/fact-sheet-united-states-and-g7-plan-to-defeat-the-covid-19-pandemic-in-2022-and-prevent-the-next-pandemic/>

GOALS OF THE U.S. COVID-19 GLOBAL RESPONSE AND RECOVERY FRAMEWORK

Overarching Goal: End the pandemic; mitigate its wider harms to people and societies; and strengthen the global recovery and readiness for future pandemic threats

OBJECTIVES

- 1 Accelerate widespread and equitable access to and **delivery of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccinations**
- 2 Reduce morbidity and mortality from COVID-19, mitigate transmission, and **strengthen health systems**, including to prevent, detect, and respond to pandemic threats
- 3 **Address acute needs** driven by COVID-19, mitigate household shocks, and build resilience
- 4 **Bolster economies and other critical systems** under stress due to COVID-19 to prevent backsliding and enable recovery
- 5 Strengthen the **international health security architecture** to prevent, detect, and respond to pandemic threats

The U.S. cannot do this alone: we will partner with governments, international organizations, philanthropies, nonprofits, the private sector, and - most critically - on the frontlines with affected communities worldwide.

INTRODUCTION

The novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) that emerged in late 2019 has killed millions of people, infected hundreds of millions more, and extensively disrupted markets, politics, and the very ways we live our lives.

Today, the pandemic is at a hopeful—but also perilous—point. As vaccines become more widely available and multiple candidates have proven safe and highly effective, there is a real prospect that an ambitious and concerted global response operation could succeed in ending the pandemic. Yet scaling the production, procurement, and delivery of these vaccines around the world will take time and collective action. The emergence of more dangerous variants of the virus and increase in global incidence makes this a race against the clock—the variants are driving wider transmission and accelerating the death toll. More broadly, the pandemic’s impacts continue to reverberate far beyond the immediate health crisis. Humanitarian needs, food insecurity, poverty, learning loss, gender-based violence, economic instability, insecurity, a looming liquidity crisis and debt crises in low-income countries, and authoritarianism are all on the rise. Taken together, the cascading impacts of the pandemic present a generational challenge.

The *U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework*³ lays out a vision for ending the pandemic, mitigating its worst impacts, and building back better, together. To this end, under the *U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework*, the U.S. Government will pursue five objectives. Together, these objectives constitute a comprehensive approach to managing the immediate global health crisis and ending the pandemic, while also mitigating the widespread harms the pandemic has caused to households, boosting economies and reinforcing critical systems that underpin global stability, and strengthening the international architecture for preventing, detecting, and responding to future pandemic threats.

All of these efforts require unity of purpose among the U.S. Government and its many governmental, multilateral, civil-society, and private-sector partners. The United States cannot succeed unless the wider global response succeeds, nor achieve the objectives outlined here, alone—this is a vision for collective action.

³ The *Response and Recovery Framework* aligns with the [National Security Memorandum on United States Global Leadership to Strengthen the International COVID-19 Response and to Advance Global Health Security and Biological Preparedness \(NSM-1\)](#), the [Interim National Security Strategic Guidance](#), and the broader [National Strategy for the COVID-19 Response and Pandemic Preparedness](#).

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The primary goal of the *U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework* is to end the pandemic—that is, bringing COVID-19 cases down to manageable levels and bringing mortality down to pre-pandemic baselines, while mitigating the rippling disruptions to society stemming from the public health crisis. This entails administering safe and effective COVID-19 vaccinations to as many people as possible, as quickly as possible, and leveraging other options to reduce transmission in the interim. The success of all other efforts is contingent, in part, on achieving the target of vaccinating two-thirds of the global eligible population before the end of 2022. Yet the effectiveness of health activities also depends, at the same time, on limiting the wider harms of the pandemic. If communities continue to struggle with sharply rising food insecurity and poverty, the escalation of other health risks, and other deprivations, and if economies, government institutions, and other systems remain overburdened and under stress, it will imperil a sustained and effective public health response. These imperatives are interdependent, and the efforts under them mutually reinforcing. Across these efforts, activities must also build capacities for recovery, resilience, and readiness, in particular for future pandemic threats. Additionally, a coordinated communications and public outreach campaign is a critical component of the success of the Response and Recovery Framework. Given the significance of the United States’ voice within the global health apparatus, the U.S. Government must deploy a robust and data-driven communications strategy that amplifies progress towards the objectives outlined below.

GOALS

End the pandemic; mitigate its wider harms to people and societies; and strengthen the global recovery and readiness for future pandemic threats

OBJECTIVES

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- 2 Reduce morbidity and mortality from COVID-19, mitigate transmission, and **strengthen health systems**, including to prevent, detect, and respond to pandemic threats
- 3 **Address acute needs** driven by COVID-19, mitigate household shocks, and build resilience
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Objective 1

Accelerate widespread and equitable access to and delivery of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccinations, with no strings attached

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The uncontrolled spread of COVID-19 creates opportunities for the virus to continue to spread and mutate, contributing to ongoing disease and disruptions, and imperiling efforts to end the pandemic. Action is needed to support vaccination of all eligible populations and stop the spread of the virus.

LINES OF EFFORT

- a. Accelerate the supply and manufacturing of COVID-19 vaccines and consumables and expand fill-finish capacity
- b. Support comprehensive country readiness to administer COVID-19 vaccines, including efforts to ensure uptake and access among all eligible populations, address vaccine hesitancy, and combat mis- and disinformation
- c. Expand equitable access to, financing for, and timely delivery of vaccines, including through collaboration with the COVAX Facility
- d. Monitor and evaluate the safety and effectiveness of vaccination programs

Objective 2

Reduce morbidity and mortality from COVID-19, mitigate transmission, and strengthen health systems, including to prevent, detect, and respond to pandemic threats

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Weaknesses in many countries' health systems, combined with the impact of COVID-19 limit countries' ability to stem the pandemic and address other health risks. The best way to save lives at scale and strengthen country-level health security, during this pandemic and for any future threats, will be by supporting resilient health systems to provide quality public health services and clinical care.

LINES OF EFFORT

- a. Increase scientific knowledge of SARS-CoV-2 and other threats
- b. Support public health interventions to manage COVID-19
- c. Support the delivery of evidence-based clinical interventions and expand access to diagnostics and therapeutics to detect, manage, and treat COVID-19
- d. Mitigate negative effects on other essential health programs through targeted measures and investments and build resilient, integrated health-systems that can better respond to wider health needs and future biological threats

Objective 3

Address acute needs driven by COVID-19, mitigate household shocks, and build resilience

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The shockwaves created by the pandemic and measures taken to contain it are devastating households around the world, increasing poverty and food insecurity, widening educational gaps, and hampering people's ability to meet other basic needs. These impacts are particularly severe for vulnerable and marginalized groups, including women and girls, youth, displaced persons, and underserved populations. A concerted, multipronged response is necessary to address both acute and long-term aspects of this challenge.

LINES OF EFFORT

- a. Address urgent humanitarian needs and prevent famine
- b. Mitigate increases in food insecurity and malnutrition
- c. Provide economic relief, including through stronger social safety nets
- d. Enable children to return to learning safely and recover from education disruptions
- e. Reduce gender-based violence and promote the protection of children and other vulnerable groups

Objective 4

Bolster economies and other critical systems under stress due to COVID-19 to prevent backsliding and enable recovery

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The pandemic threatens macroeconomic stability and vital political, economic, and social systems—holding back economic growth, pushing sovereign debt to unsustainable levels, disrupting service provision, and diminishing trust in governments, with the poorest countries likely to face the longest-lasting impacts. The economic fallout from the pandemic is shrinking public revenues and increasing already-high sovereign debt levels, further limiting governments' ability to respond. Further, weak institutions and limited controls on corruption allow graft and the diversion of life-saving resources from pandemic response. Targeted interventions are needed to strengthen and reinforce those systems that underpin global stability, the ongoing response to the pandemic, and promote a sustained recovery.

LINES OF EFFORT

- a. Reinforce macroeconomic stability, including through debt-relief efforts, and boost private-sector investment and job creation
- b. Enable safe and efficient international travel and tourism
- c. Improve human security and prevent conflict in increasingly fragile contexts
- d. Address critical governance and human rights challenges exacerbated by the pandemic

Objective 5

Strengthen the international health security architecture to prevent, detect, and respond to pandemic threats

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The pandemic exposed weaknesses in global health security. Specific barriers to greater health security must be identified and overcome as we continue to deal with ongoing waves of COVID-19 and the need to also be prepared for potential new pandemics. International and multilateral bodies—including the WHO and the wider UN system—need strengthened capacities to play a greater role in creating incentives, mobilizing finance, establishing channels for information flow, and facilitating research.

LINES OF EFFORT

- a. Improve incentives to build core health security capacities, including coordinated responses to infectious disease threats
- b. Develop a sustainable, catalytic global health security financing mechanism
- c. Strengthen and enhance international arrangements and governance regimes for global health security
- d. Strengthen and reform the World Health Organization (WHO) and other parts of the UN system critical for health security
- e. Advance international collaboration on scientific research to prevent and fight pandemics and other biothreats

PROGRESS METRICS

The U.S. will contribute substantially to help achieve the global target to vaccinate 70% of the world by the end of 2022. We will also leverage our support to encourage other donor countries to contribute to this effort. To advance our support for this target, the U.S. Government will use a set of high-level proxy metrics and timebound targets to track implementation of the *Response and Recovery Framework*. Metrics will track to the objectives of the Framework, and allow the U.S. to adapt interventions as the situation evolves.

CROSS-CUTTING PRINCIPLES

The U.S. Government will instill four core principles into its implementation of this *U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework*, across lines of effort. These principles will underpin the array of activities that Departments and Agencies will undertake, and their broader engagement with partners and other stakeholders, to advance the Framework's objectives.

- **Humility, Multilateralism, and Partnerships:** The U.S. Government will recommit to working in partnership and with humility, recognizing that no one nation, alone, can defeat the pandemic. The U.S. Government will work as part of the rules-based international system, including multilateral institutions, to advance the objectives of this *U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework*. The U.S. Government will restore relationships with the WHO and other UN agencies, regional organizations, international financial institutions, and other international organizations, and, at the same time, engage new partners and build those partnerships around the globe. Embracing multilateralism means working with and through multilateral and international bodies, coordinating with donor partners and the private sector, working intensively across sectors and with civil society, and exercising leadership in the areas of global health, development and humanitarian assistance, and economic recovery.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** The U.S. Government will promote equity in its COVID-19 activities under the *U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework* and elevate the voices, participation, and decision-making of women and girls, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, LGBTQI+ individuals, indigenous peoples, displaced people, and other vulnerable, marginalized, and underserved populations, especially those who have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19.⁴ At the same time, the U.S. Government will commit to embodying the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion in its own operations and pursuing the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities.

⁴ Such groups may also include, but are not limited to, migrants, religious minorities, racial and ethnic minorities, cultural minorities, caste groups, and people of diverse economic classes and political opinions. These groups often suffer from discrimination in the application of laws and policies and access to resources, services, and social protection, and they may be subject to persecution, harassment, or violence.

- **Evidence-Based and Risk-Based Decision-Making, Learning, and Adapting:** The U.S. Government will commit to evidence-based and risk-based decision-making as it implements the *U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework*. To use evidence effectively, the U.S. Government will continually monitor, evaluate, and learn from its activities, both assistance programs and other diplomatic, technical, and policy engagements. Given the uniquely complex and dynamic health, humanitarian, economic, and development problem set stemming from the pandemic, sound analysis and data-informed decisions, ongoing monitoring and evaluation, and adaptive management are all essential to successful implementation. To use risk-based decision-making, the U.S. Government will also carefully weigh the benefits of identified policy courses of action to the costs (e.g., financial terms, impacts to diplomatic and policy activities, socio-economic impacts to individuals/businesses/critical infrastructure). Final decisions then require effective and coordinated messaging across key stakeholders to ensure consistent and aligned communication to both global partners and the public.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** The U.S. Government will ensure transparency of and accountability in decision-making and the use of funds to implement the *U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework*. The U.S. Government will communicate clearly about new science and changes to evidence-based recommendations and establish clear, high-quality metrics to assess progress in implementation, and adjust activities as needed.

CONCLUSION

The pandemic presents a uniquely complex health, humanitarian, economic, development and messaging problem set, one characterized by heightened and prolonged uncertainty. This underscores the need for an adaptive, iterative *U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework*—this document provides a framework, but one that is meant to be flexible to changing circumstances and evolving challenges.

Monitoring the metrics and progress towards targets will allow the U.S. Government, and its international partners, to adjust and adapt the Framework in a data-driven manner. Departments and Agencies will supplement these high-level metrics with their own indicators to routinely track efforts and outcomes in the areas in which they contribute to the Framework. Departments and Agencies will also support this Framework with a coordinated communication strategy in order to bolster positive messaging on U.S. COVID-19 global response and recovery efforts and combat negative narratives from strategic competitors around the world.

The U.S. Government is also committed to consulting widely with external stakeholders, including communities, to generate ideas, foster collaboration, ensure transparency and accountability, and mobilize unified efforts. As Departments and Agencies implement the *U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework*, a wide and diverse array of perspectives will be critical to its success.