



USAID'S CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO IMPLEMENTING THE UNITED STATES COVID-19 GLOBAL RESPONSE AND RECOVERY FRAMEWORK

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MADAGASCAR, USAID

INTRODUCTION

As the COVID-19 pandemic enters a new phase, USAID remains committed to supporting the Administration's goals to respond to COVID-19, counter the impacts of the pandemic, and build stronger global health security to address urgent needs now and in the long run. The pandemic's changing nature and evolving global needs, emerging technologies, and improved strategies to address COVID-19 necessitated an update to the original [U.S. COVID-19 Global Response and Recovery Framework](#) (GRRF), published by the White House in July 2021. In response to the original GRRF, USAID developed and has been executing an [implementation plan](#) tailored to the Agency's strengths and priorities. This addendum summarizes USAID's continued efforts to implement the commitments outlined in the updated GRRF released in September 2022.

Since 2021, the international community has made remarkable progress, with strong leadership from the U.S. government. The whole-of-government [Initiative for Global Vaccine Access](#) (Global VAX), led by USAID, has scaled up and accelerated vaccinations across the globe. Across the African continent, for example, vaccination levels have steadily increased since the Global VAX Initiative's launch in December 2021. In the same period, coverage of COVID-19 vaccinations has nearly tripled, from 7 percent to 21 percent. In Tanzania, vaccination rates among the eligible population skyrocketed in just six months: from 15 percent in June 2022 to more than 98 percent in December 2022. With support from the Global VAX Initiative, community leaders encouraged people to get vaccinated, and health workers went door to door to vaccinate those hardest to reach.

Although many countries continue to experience second-order effects from the pandemic, as a result of progress made to date and the improved strategies to counter COVID-19, the second-order impacts are not the main focus of the updated GRRF and no new funds are expected to be dedicated to those efforts. Nonetheless, USAID will continue programming, monitoring, and evaluation begun under the original GRRF, including around the second-order impacts of COVID-19. Lessons learned from the ongoing efforts continue to inform the Agency's current and future interventions, including, among others, pandemic preparedness and response; programs supporting the safe return to school; emergency food and hygiene; employment; prevention of democratic backsliding, conflict, and gender-based violence; development of agriculture; non-COVID-19 health interventions; and monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) activities.

The updated 2022 GRRF reflects the pandemic's current nature and the U.S. government's unwavering focus on both increasing vaccine uptake, as the cornerstone of an impactful response, and enhancing the resilience of health systems to deliver tests and treatments, including oral antivirals and oxygen. Strengthening local health systems and the global health security architecture is also key to preventing or mitigating future pandemic threats.

UPDATED GRRF OBJECTIVES

USAID is dedicated to operationalizing the updated objectives as well as the programs directly linked to their achievement.

OBJECTIVE I VACCINATE THE HIGHEST RISK AND HARDEST-TO-REACH

The United States has been at the forefront of the COVID-19 global response and – together with our local, national, and global partners – continues the vital work of delivering vaccines and life-saving therapeutics. As of September 30, 2022, and thanks to the generosity of the U.S. Congress, USAID has provided more than \$10.6 billion toward the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, including efforts to address the social and economic ramifications of COVID-19. As of January 2023, the U.S. government, inclusive of USAID efforts, has facilitated the donation of over 682.3 million vaccines to 116 countries around the world.

With vaccines no longer in short supply, many low- and lower-middle-income countries (LMIC) need support to strengthen the delivery systems and structures that put shots in arms. To that end, in December 2021, the U.S. government announced the Global VAX Initiative, through which it has committed nearly \$2 billion to support partners in 120 countries in addressing challenges to vaccine delivery and uptake.

Global VAX has entailed a surge in financial, technical, and diplomatic support to 11 countries with significant need and potential for rapid progress, including Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Eswatini, Ghana, Lesotho, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. The initiative is producing remarkable results. At the beginning of 2022, only four of the 11 countries had full vaccination rates above 10 percent. Today, eight of the mentioned 11 countries have surpassed 25 percent coverage.

Still, many countries, particularly low-income countries, remain dangerously undervaccinated and unprepared for a new variant or a surge in infection numbers. To further accelerate access to and uptake of COVID-19 vaccines, in order to reach the highest risk and hardest-to-reach populations, USAID is:

- Supporting the integration of COVID-19 vaccinations into health systems and routine health services to enable countries to deploy this lifesaving protection in the long run; and
- Strengthening partner countries' routine immunization infrastructure to help prevent or mitigate backsliding on routine childhood vaccinations.



PHOTO: USAID / EGYPT

OBJECTIVE 2

SCALE AND INTEGRATE TESTING AND TREATMENT

Strengthening health systems is critical to the goals of preventing, detecting, and treating COVID-19 and its variants. Existing antiviral treatments are out of reach for people in low-income countries due to unavailability, lack of access to testing, and disrupted essential health services. In addition, oxygen, a vital component for COVID-19 care and beyond, is not widely available.

USAID continues to scale up access to treatments and care that can protect some of the most vulnerable populations around the world from severe illness and death from COVID-19. The following efforts and investments have the potential for long-term impact on partner countries' health systems, including strengthening their capacity to prevent and respond not only to this pandemic, but also to other critical health needs such as child and adult pneumonia, safe birth, safe surgery, and new infectious disease outbreaks.

- In September 2022, the U.S. government through USAID [announced](#) programming in oral antiviral medicines (or test-to-treat) in ten countries and expansion of access to oxygen in many more.
- USAID and its implementing partners are working with partner nations' health ministries, civil society, healthcare workers, and local stakeholders to pilot test-to-treat programs in Bangladesh, Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, and Senegal, while also tracking best practices and lessons learned to be shared with the United States and globally.
- Due to more than \$100 million in COVID-19 assistance funding through 2022, USAID has built systems to provide oxygen to facilities in more than 50 countries – including India, Haiti, and Ghana, to name a few – and is in the process of building and improving oxygen systems for facilities in 13 countries across Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. USAID is also employing market-based approaches that aim to make the future purchase of oxygen more affordable in nine countries across Sub-Saharan Africa.
- To support unpredictable surges in COVID-19 globally, USAID established a rapid response stockpile through which it has already procured over 1,100,000 rapid diagnostic test kits, 19,000 liters of hand sanitizer, and more than 32,000,000 pieces of essential personal protective equipment to support urgent needs in LMICs.



PHOTO: USAID / UKRAINE

OBJECTIVE 3

HEALTH SECURITY AND FUTURE PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE

As the global community continues to battle COVID-19, it is also grappling with numerous concurrent outbreaks – stark reminders of the constant threat emanating from infectious diseases. Existing evidence and data demonstrate that bolstering global health security capacity helps countries prevent, detect, and respond more rapidly to health emergencies. Yet significant gaps within both local health systems and global health security architecture remain.

USAID is contributing to addressing many of those gaps, including working to achieve the National Biodefense Strategy and Implementation Plan goal for global health security through strengthening the global health security architecture to prevent, detect, and respond to COVID-19 and future pandemic threats in 50 countries across sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, and Europe and Eurasia¹. Specifically, USAID is:

- Collaborating with other U.S. federal departments and agencies to support the newly established Pandemic Fund, provide technical advice, and represent the U.S. government on the Fund’s Governing Board;²
- Improving global coordination on health security through supporting, along with other U.S. federal departments and agencies, preparedness for the next pandemic;
- Contributing funds to the [Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations \(CEPI\)](#) – a global partnership working to accelerate the development of vaccines against epidemic and pandemic threats – as well as serving as the U.S. government representative on the CEPI Investor Council;
- Leveraging primary health care systems as well as community level and other public health structures to enhance pandemic preparedness and response capabilities; and
- Initiating a dedicated Outbreak Response Team that is expanding USAID’s capabilities to respond to multiple infectious disease outbreaks simultaneously, as well as improving outbreak response coordination with national governments, multilateral partners, and other U.S. government departments and agencies.

¹ “Provide direct support to 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’ or comparable level (depending on country context) in at least five technical areas critical to the country, by 2025, as measured by relevant health security assessments, such as those conducted within the World Health Organization (WHO) IHR Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.” See White House, *National Biodefense Strategy and Implementation Plan* (Washington, DC, 2022), p. vii.

² Subject to completion of all requirements, USAID plans to obligate \$200 million of FY2022 funds to meet the U.S. government’s total planned contributions to the Fund, as of May 12, 2022, of \$450 million.

CONCLUSION

The 2021 USAID implementation plan describes the interventions that USAID has employed to address the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. This addendum does not change USAID’s tactics or strategies; rather, it enhances our approaches through accumulated practice and focuses our efforts on implementing the updated GRRF’s objectives.