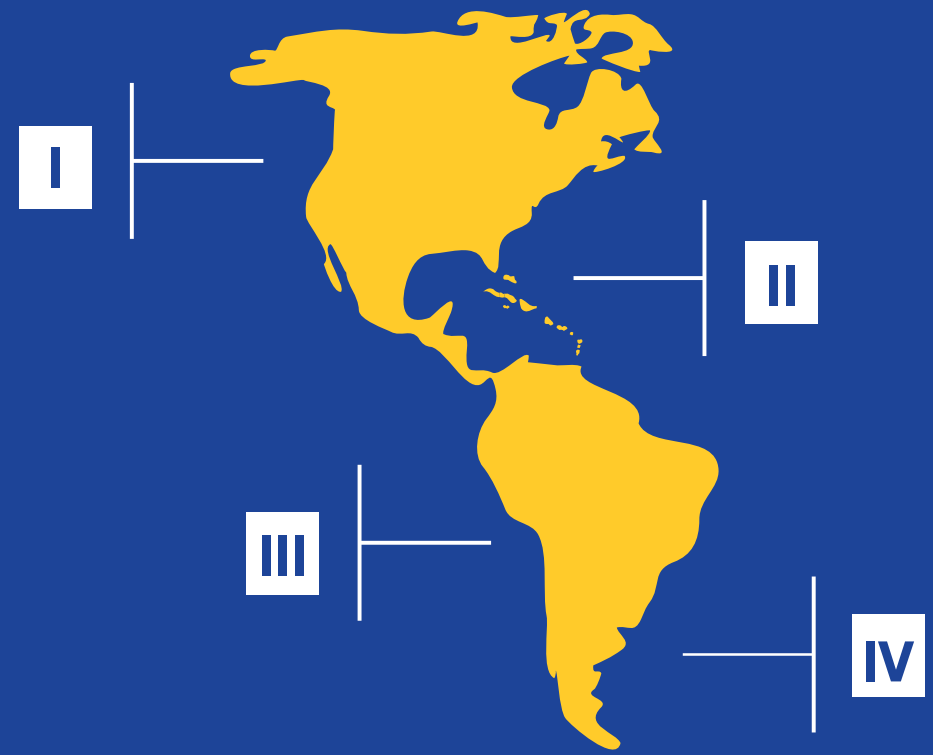




Developing respiratory pathogen pandemic preparedness plans

Steps for updating and developing respiratory pathogen pandemic preparedness and response plans



Summary

Planning for public health emergencies should ensure that capabilities developed during previous emergencies are maintained, incorporated, and put into practice when a new event of public health concern arises. Investments in pandemic preparedness lead to more rapid detection and a stronger response to public health threats, thereby shielding communities from the debilitating social and economic effects of epidemics and pandemics.

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) recognizes the efforts of countries in the Region of the Americas to develop and/or strengthen their respiratory pathogen pandemic plans. PAHO supports planning activities with tools and expertise, aligning these efforts with the Preparedness and Resilience for Emerging Threats (PRET) initiative.

The PRET initiative is an innovative approach to improving disease pandemic preparedness. It recognizes that the same systems, capacities, knowledge, and tools can be leveraged and applied for groups of pathogens based on their mode of transmission (respiratory, vector-borne, foodborne etc.). PRET incorporates the latest tools and approaches for shared learning and collective action established during the COVID-19 pandemic and other recent public health emergencies. It places the principles of equity, inclusivity, and coherence at the forefront

This document outlines **four steps** for updating and developing respiratory pathogen pandemic preparedness and response plans.

- I — Prepare, analyze the situation and engage stakeholders
- II — Draft the plan
- III — Evaluate, finalize and disseminate the plan
- IV — Implement, monitor and continuously improve the plan



Scope

Guide the process of updating and developing preparedness and response plans for pandemics caused by respiratory pathogens, in order to strengthen their basic capacities and encourage the countries of the Region of the Americas to have operational, proven plans, and with a regular monitoring and updating plan to address epidemics and pandemics in the face of this type of threat.

Objectives

General objective

Facilitate a roadmap for the national implementation of pandemic planning of respiratory pathogens and identify points of technical cooperation, aligned with the PRET initiative, in the countries of the Region of the Americas.

Specific objectives

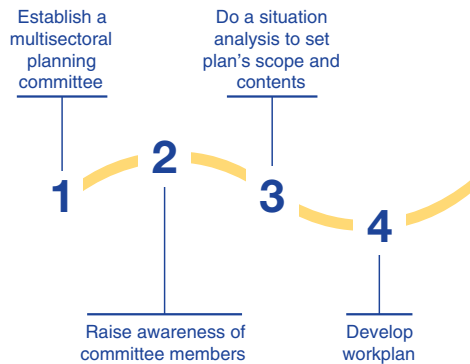
- Inform all countries in the region about global initiatives including respiratory pathogen pandemic preparedness guidance from the WHO
- Facilitate the 'how' of national planning for respiratory pathogen epidemics and pandemics including specificities for each pathogen and aligned with the efforts, tools, and mechanisms already existing in each country.
- Provide tools for planning, updating, implementation, and monitoring of the plan for epidemics and pandemics caused by respiratory pathogens.



Steps for respiratory pathogen pandemic planning

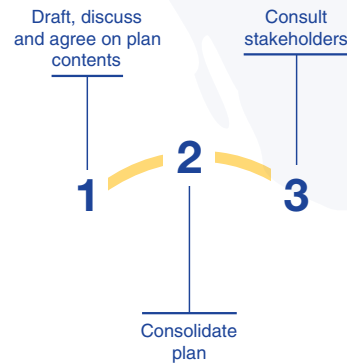
Step I

Prepare, analyze the situation and engage stakeholders



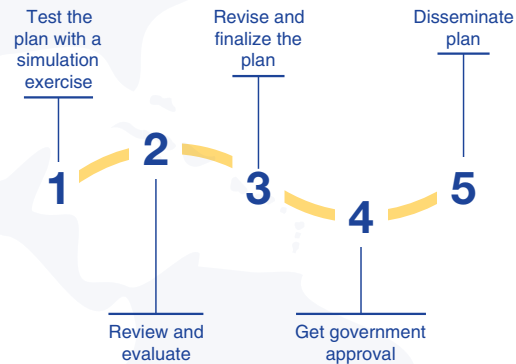
Step II

Draft the plan



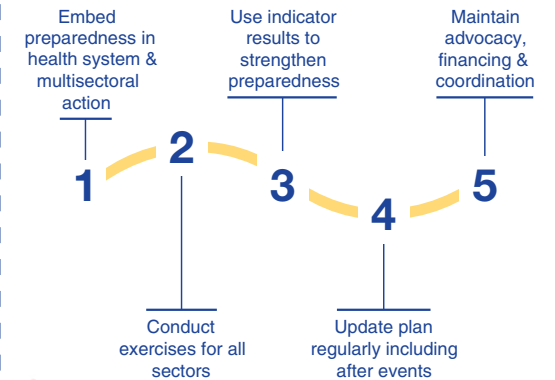
Step III

Evaluate, finalize and disseminate the plan



Step IV

Implement, monitor and continuously improve the plan

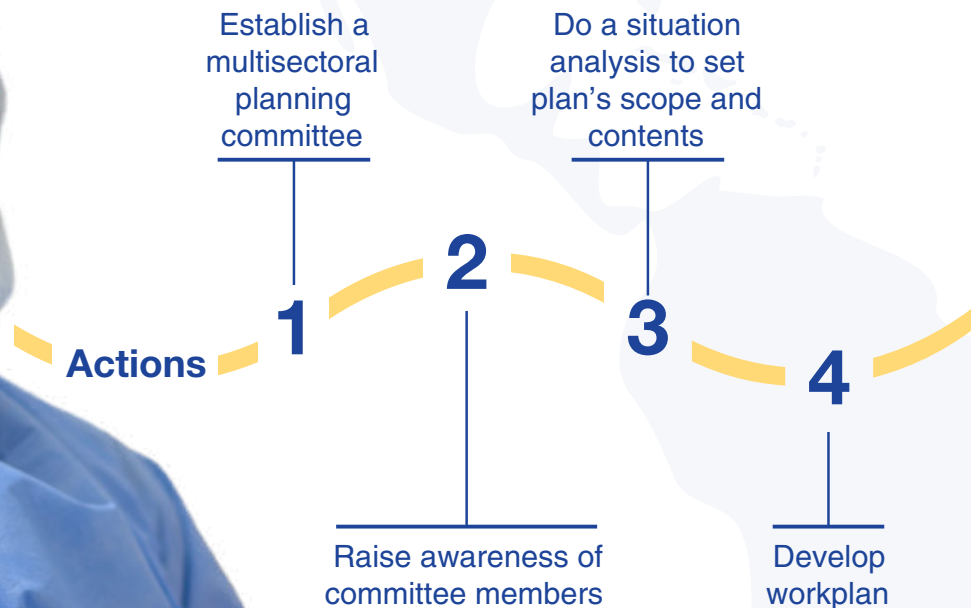


Step I

Prepare, analyze the situation and engage stakeholders

Strategy: Identify a national committee or working group to coordinate multisectoral planning

Goal: Ensure strong leadership and multisectoral and multi-level government commitment in epidemic and pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response



Tasks

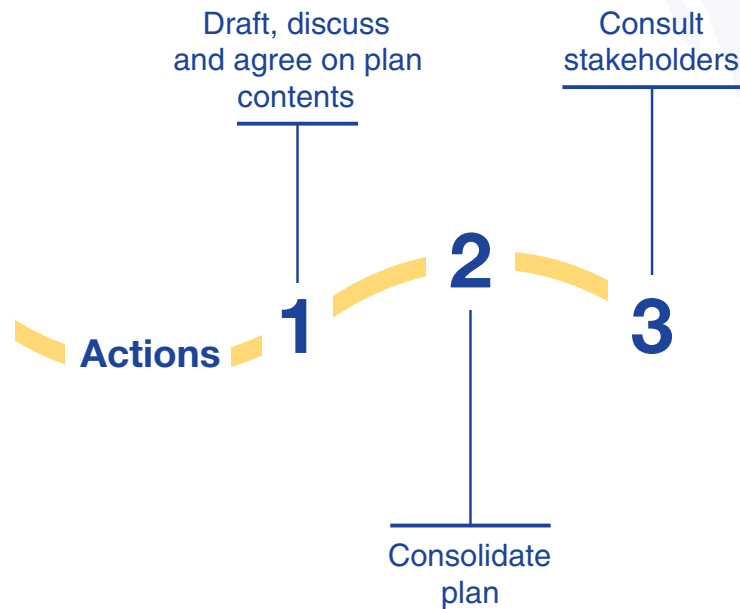
- Conduct a stakeholder analysis to identify all sectors relevant to prevention, preparedness, and response to a respiratory pathogen pandemic.
- Convene a multisectoral planning committee reflecting whole-of-government and whole-of-society representation. Include experts in respiratory pathogens (e.g., clinicians, epidemiologists, microbiologists etc) or identify relevant technical advisory bodies/groups that provide relevant scientific inputs and guidance.
- Identify lessons learned from past events and scope the core content of the new/ updated respiratory pathogen pandemic preparedness plan.
- Develop a workplan with a budget and assign tasks.

Step II

Draft the plan

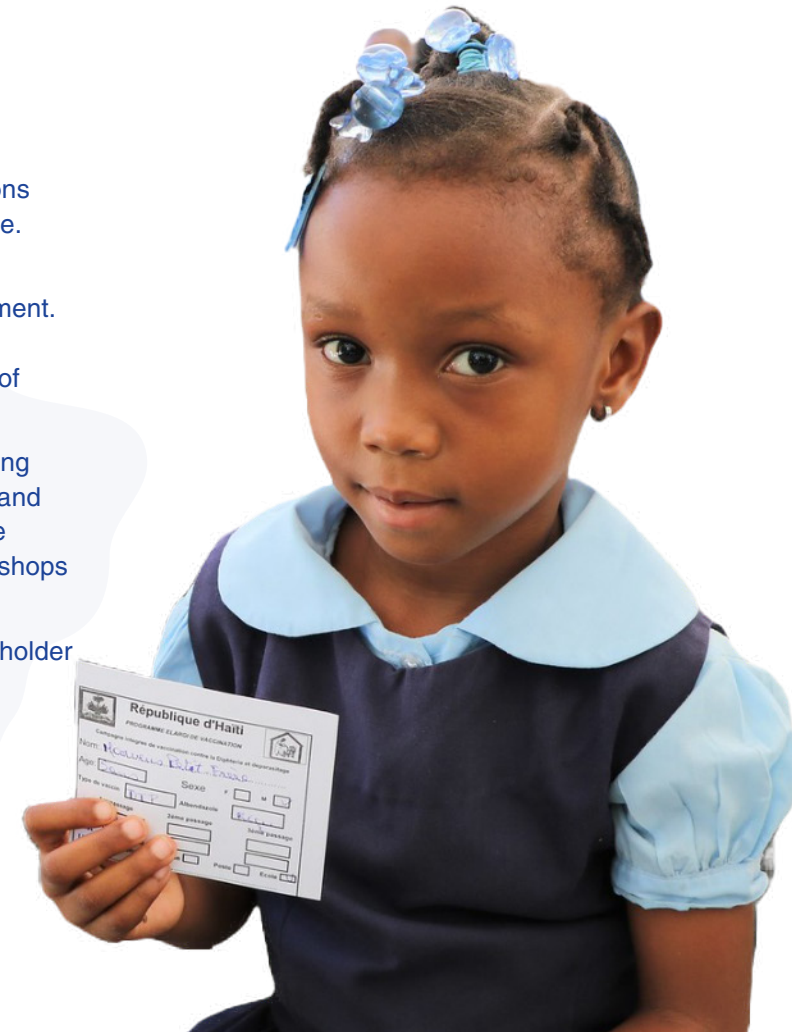
Strategy: Establish mechanisms to have an updated national plan with key actors in the planning, preparedness, response, and recovery process.

Goal: Have the draft document of the national plan for preparedness and response to respiratory pathogens (or respiratory viruses)



Tasks

- Assign specialists from each sector to develop or update the plan with actions needed during each operational stage.
- Collate and consolidate the different sectoral inputs into a cohesive document. Check the logic flow and the list of planned actions to ensure feasibility of implementation.
- Seek inputs from stakeholders including users who implement preparedness and response activities. This can be done through targeted consultations, workshops or focus groups.
- Update the draft plan following stakeholder engagement.



Step III

Evaluate, finalize and disseminate the plan

Strategy: Perform a table or desk simulation exercise, using progressive scenarios for participants to review and reflect on different components of their plan

Goal: Evaluate the draft updated plan through a simulation exercise to identify critical management areas and aspects that need to be strengthened



Tasks

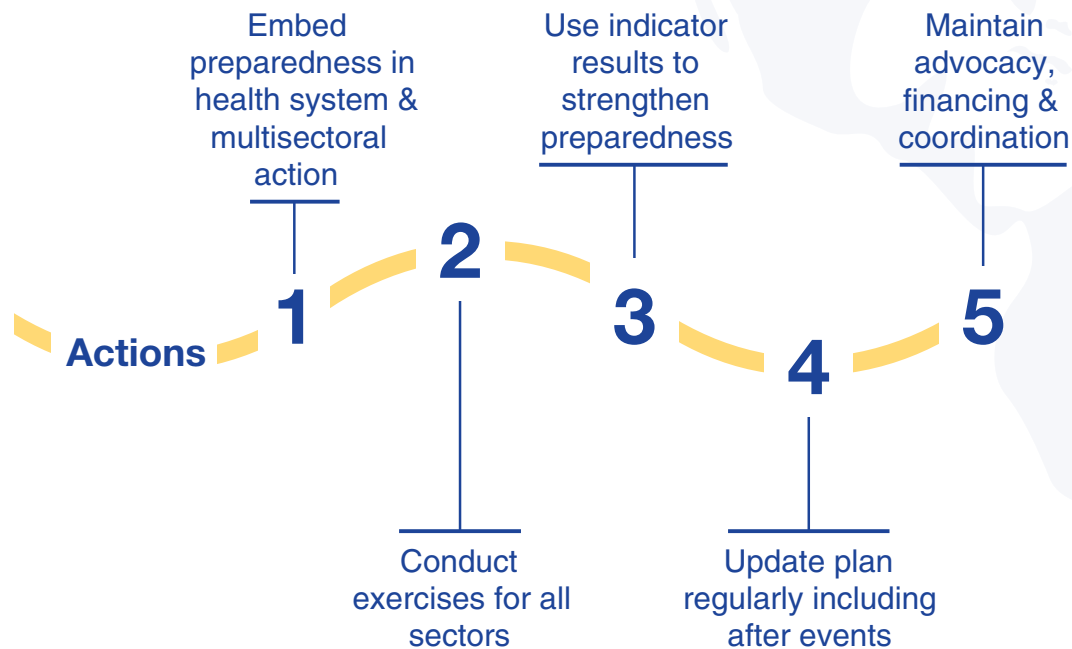
- Test the draft plan by conducting simulation exercises, evaluate its fitness-for-purpose and incorporate any learnings. The multisectoral planning committee needs to oversee this process including its contextualization in broader emergency and disaster risk management.
- Revise and finalize the plan, and seek approval from the relevant government authorities.
- Disseminate the approved plan broadly through the multisectoral committee and other whole-of-society and whole-of-government channels to stakeholders including the public.

Step IV

Implement, monitor and continuously improve the plan

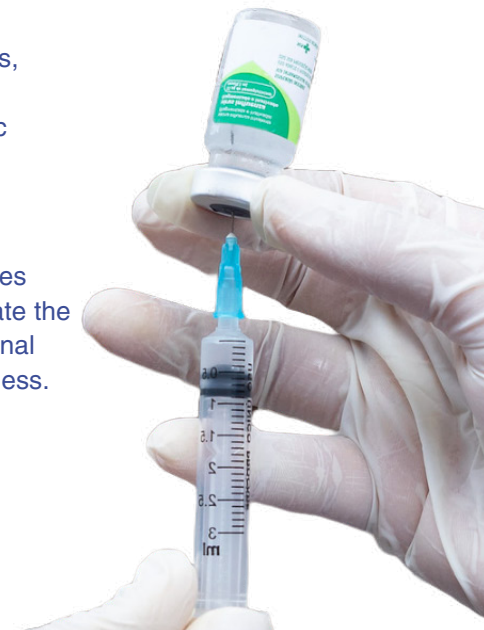
Strategy: Generation of mechanisms to ensure regular monitoring of plan implementation, that includes all sectors.

Goal: Ensure high-level leadership to maintain the continued usefulness and functionality of the plan.



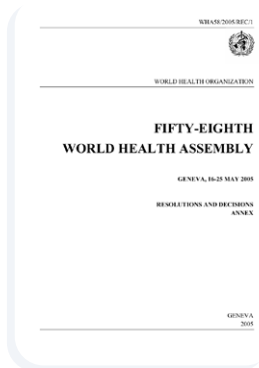
Tasks

- Implement the actions outlined in the plan to strengthen preparedness at the national and subnational levels, and accounting for different contexts and population needs.
- Establish a schedule to exercise different aspects of the plan, including multisectoral aspects.
- At least yearly, gather the multisectoral planning committee to monitor progress, especially measures in line with the IHR (2005) core capacities and specific functional capacities for respiratory pathogen pandemic preparedness (PRET Module 1, Chapter 7).
- Use the routine monitoring and exercises to identify gaps and to continually update the plan and drive improvements in functional multisectoral and multi-level preparedness.

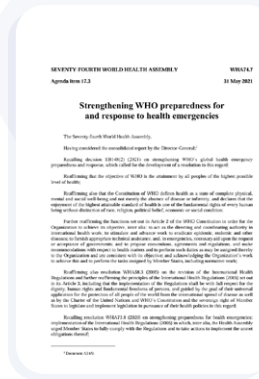




Key resources



WHO58.5



WHO74.7



Strengthening pandemic preparedness planning for respiratory pathogens: Policy brief, 27 April 2022



Preparedness and Resilience for Emerging Threats
Module 1: Planning for respiratory pathogen pandemics



A checklist for respiratory pathogen pandemic preparedness planning

