



Global

Mainstreaming the Human Security Approach in Strengthening the Global Health Architecture

Background information

The Ebola outbreak and the response by governments and international organizations revealed shortcomings in the manner in which national and international systems were configured to respond to health emergencies. In April 2015, the Secretary-General commissioned the High-level Panel on the Global Response to Health Crises ("Panel") to undertake a wide range of consultations and to make recommendations to strengthen national and international systems to prevent and manage future health crises taking into account lessons learned from the response to the outbreak of Ebola virus in West Africa. On 9 February 2016, the Panel issued its report entitled "Protecting humanity from future health crises" (A/70/723). The Panel provided 27 recommendations that identified actions to be taken at the national level, regional and international levels. Subsequently, a Global Health Task Force was established to mainstream the recommendations of the Panel and improve future responses to health crises.

Goals and objectives

The overall goal of the programme is to support the Task Force in monitoring, coordinating and supporting the implementation of the recommendations of the Panel. The programme focuses on ways in which health crises can be better anticipated and responded to through the human security approach. Specifically the Task Force aims to: (i) engage in dialogue and exchange of ideas in order to maintain momentum on the implementation of the Panel's recommendations; (ii) identify emerging health crises or gaps in the global health architecture that may need to be brought to the attention of the Secretary-General and the international community; and (iii) advise the Secretary-General on whether the systems and processes in place for addressing health crises are functioning sufficiently in a proactive and robust manner.



DURATION

May 2016 — August 2017



UN IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

Office of the Special Adviser on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Climate Change



OTHER KEY PARTNERS

N/A



BENEFICIARIES

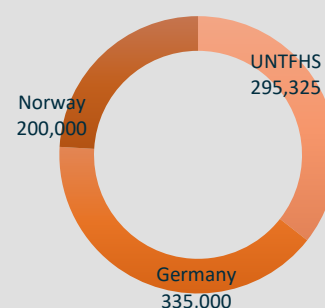
Vulnerable populations



TOTAL BUDGET

US\$ 830,325

POOLING OF RESOURCES



Beneficiaries

A strengthened health architecture benefits all populations vulnerable to and/or affected by health crises. Additional beneficiaries are UN system staff, national government officials and civil society members who are better informed about the lessons learned from the Ebola epidemic.

Applying the Human Security approach

The human security approach is particularly relevant to strengthening the global health architecture and ensuring that national, regional and international systems are optimized to prepare for and respond to future health emergencies.

To this end, the Task Force recommends greater emphasis on community engagement before and during outbreaks so that preparedness and response activities are culturally sensitive; better understood and promoted by communities; and meet the needs of those impacted, especially the most vulnerable.

Moreover, the application of human security recognizes that measures in response to health emergencies need to comprehensively address the full emergency management cycle and thus calls for multi-sectoral collaboration, bringing together health experts with other stakeholders, such as those who work in development, finance, sanitation, logistics and gender issues. This promotes a level of preparedness that brings in government ministries beyond the Ministry of Health and advocates for the One Health approach.

Furthermore, by adopting a context-specific approach, health strategies must be sensitive to the varying degrees of capacities, diverse cultural practices, and unique legal frameworks across countries. Lastly, human security's focus on prevention supports solutions that strengthen national health systems, enhance health-related labor force in times of crises, and prioritize research and development for neglected diseases.

These elements of the human security approach can help strengthen the global health architecture and enhance health security for all.

Key achievements

The Task Force was an important step in raising the importance of enhanced cooperation to prevent and respond to global health crises in the wake of the Ebola epidemic. Its work highlighted key areas of concern related to global health crises, such as the insufficient amount of public funds for maintaining health security at the national, regional and global levels, and presented a broad set of ambitious recommendations to raise the importance of global health crises and strengthen responses at multiple levels. These included support for national health systems; systematic engagement of civil society and local communities; enhanced role for regional arrangements; strengthened UN system capacity and integrated action; greater focus on preparedness, including through simulations; emphasis on research and innovation, including a One Health approach; sustainable financing for health security; attention on the gender dimensions of health crises; and, higher priority for health security on national and global agendas. While the work of the Task Force was forward-looking and comprehensive, it was limited to a period of one year and did not include the elaboration of follow-up mechanisms for implementing the recommendations.



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