

28 August 2015, Edition 1

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## Reforming WHO's Work in Outbreaks and Emergencies with Health and Humanitarian Consequences



This is the first newsletter on the steps being taken by WHO and partners to strengthen and consolidate the Organization's capacities to respond and prepare for all manner of crises that impact people's health and disrupt the delivery of health care services.

*[Go to the WHO Reform, Emergencies Capacities website](#)*

## 6 key areas for reform



The WHO Director-General has identified six key areas of reform of WHO's work in outbreaks and emergencies, which she presented during a **press conference** on 31 July 2015, namely:

1. A **unified WHO programme for outbreaks and emergencies** with health and humanitarian consequences which maintains Organizational readiness, builds capacities of Member States, responds rapidly, predictably and effectively at country level, and partners with all stakeholders in support of governments.
2. **Priority International Health Regulations (2005) core capacities developed as an integral part of resilient health systems** to enable the rapid detection and effective response to disease outbreaks and other hazards, as well as providing people-centred health care based on primary health care.
3. A **global health emergency workforce**, to be effectively deployed in support of governments, comprising national responders; international responders from networks and partnerships; responders from UN agencies, funds and programmes; and WHO standing and surge capacity.
4. Improved functioning, transparency, effectiveness and efficiency of the **IHR (2005)**.
5. **Accelerated research and development** in epidemics or health emergencies.
6. A WHO Contingency Fund for Emergencies that is part of an **international system for financing** the response to pandemics and other health emergencies. *[Listen to the press briefing](#)*

## Advisory Group on the reform

A high-level **Advisory Group**, convened by the WHO Director-General and chaired by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Ebola, Dr David Nabarro, will meet several times before the end of 2015 and provide guidance to the WHO's emergency

reform process. In particular, the group will advise on steering reforms to strengthen WHO's capacities to respond to and prepare for disease outbreaks and other emergencies with health and humanitarian consequences. The Advisory Group comprises senior representatives from national governments, U.N. agencies, funds and programmes, NGO responders and other partners.

The group has held two meetings, on **28 July** and **26 August**, during which they advised on strengthening WHO's capacities to respond to and prepare for crises impacting on people's health, establishing an operational platform across all three levels of WHO, undertaking organizational change, generating additional resources, partnering with other relevant actors, and being more flexible and nimble.

The group advises both on overarching issues and specific subjects so as to generate action-oriented guidance to drive the WHO emergency reform process. Transparency underpins the Advisory Group's ways of working. Such methods include making its meeting open to staff from WHO's three levels, and publishing all materials online.

### Implementing change in WHO's emergencies work: FMTs set pace in Nepal for a global health emergency workforce



**Nepal's 25 April earthquake** inflicted great damage in remote, mountainous areas, injuring thousands of people and heavily damaging many health facilities. WHO responded swiftly. Within 48 hours, it had provided funds to Nepal's Government and medical supplies to treat 80 000 people for three months. Another urgent need was surge capacity of health workers and facilities. Collaborating with Nepal's Ministry of Health, WHO coordinated the arrival and in-country deployment of more than 100 Foreign Medical Teams (FMTs). This fast, effective response is an example of the importance of the **global health emergency workforce**, part of WHO's reform to work better in emergencies.

[Read story on Devex](#)

### Upcoming events

- 22 September: **WHO Advisory Group** third teleconference
- 21-22 September: Joint World Bank-WHO meeting on financing emergency response



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