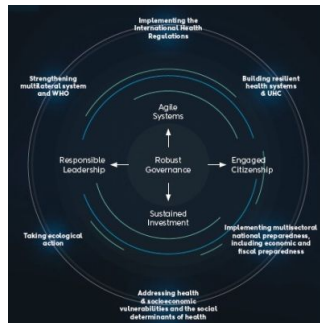


Global COVID-19 Response: “A Collective Failure”



The Global Preparedness Monitoring Board (GPMB) has released its second report ‘A World in Disorder,’ in which it harshly criticises the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

You might also like: [Assessing COVID-19 Response](#)

Created in 2017 and formally launched in 2018, the GPMB is an independent monitoring and accountability body ensuring preparedness for global health crises. In its first ‘A World in Disorder’ report published in September 2019, the group highlighted the unpreparedness, on the global level, to an inevitable pandemic of a respiratory pathogen that could kill millions and wipe out 5% of the world’s economy. The GPMB called for urgent action to be taken across the world so as not to repeat the situation of “panic and neglect” that prevailed during past health crises.

The current report builds on the previous document in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors point out “a collective failure to take pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response seriously and prioritize it accordingly” by the national and international bodies, the lack of leaders’ accountability in their actions, and the dependence on geopolitical issues that undermines the necessary multilateral action.

The report stresses the importance of prevention estimating that the loss from the current pandemic is comparable with the cost of pandemic preparedness measures taken over the period of 500 years. It predicts that the COVID-19 socioeconomic consequences will be long-lasting. The current, and counting, cost of COVID-19 response is estimated to be over €9 trillion (US\$ 11 trillion) while the future loss could be up to €8.5 trillion (US\$ 10 trillion) in earnings. As a result, sustainable and predictable financing for preparedness is urgently needed.

The authors conclude that “No-one is safe until all are safe.” They call for action on a global scale, and highlight the following major directions.

Responsible leadership – decision-makers should act early and base their actions on science, evidence and best practice. Any politicisation of health emergencies should be avoided. The preparedness policies and efforts must be co-ordinated on both national and international levels, and across governments, industry players and international organisations, particularly when it comes to fair vaccine allocation.

Engaged citizenship – empowered citizens can hold their governments accountable for their actions while each individual is responsible for their own and their immediate community’s education and behaviours.

Strong and agile national and global systems for global health security – for the governments, the necessary elements of national policies include strengthening national systems for preparedness, ensuring availability of core public health capacities and workforce for surveillance and clinical services, as well as establishing systems of social protection for vulnerable populations; the research sector and international agencies should improve coordination and develop policies for adequate response to health emergencies; also, governments should support WHO in its actions on pandemic preparedness and response.

Sustained investment in prevention and preparedness, commensurate with the scale of a pandemic threat – sustainable financing must be provided by all stakeholders alike, from national governments to international organisations, to mitigate the current and future pandemics’ impact, establish mechanisms for global health security and support global R&D for health emergencies.

Robust global governance of preparedness for health emergencies – International Health Regulations must be updated to include the lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic while international agencies and their leaders should agree on an international framework for health emergency preparedness and response through a UN Summit on Global Health Security.

"We have already learned many crucial lessons that demand immediate action if we are to say with any confidence, 'never again'. But learning without action is pointless, and unsustained commitment is futile," the GPMB experts conclude. " Failure to learn the lessons of COVID-19, or to act on them with the necessary resources and commitment, will mean that the next pandemic, which is sure to come, will be even more damaging."

You can read the full report [here](#).

Source: [WHO](#)

Image credit: [GPMB](#)

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