

Connecting to build a safer and more secure world

Our interconnected world is at increasing risk from infectious diseases. The global Zika virus epidemic and the 2014–15 Ebola outbreak in West Africa are stark reminders of our collective vulnerability. However, the global interconnectivity that creates the risk of pandemics also provides the means to collaborate on the systems and solutions that enable the world to prevent, detect, and respond to public health threats.

In 2015, PATH joined with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other organizations to help advance the US government’s pledge to support, assist, and empower countries in anticipating, preventing, and overcoming infectious disease outbreaks.

PATH’s Global Health Security Partnership (GHSP), a five-year effort funded by the CDC, is strengthening public health systems in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Senegal, Tanzania, and Vietnam. We do this by expanding infectious disease surveillance, strengthening laboratory capacity, and developing effective information systems. In these countries, PATH supports national governments and partners to leverage and improve interconnected health systems across laboratories, health facilities, and emergency operations centers, and works to improve data quality and promote data use to effectively address outbreak threats.

PARTNERSHIP PRIORITIES

Key to the GHSP’s success is close collaboration across PATH teams in each country with ministries of health, local organizations, and CDC country offices. Together, we are strengthening, integrating, and sustaining systems that are critical to preventing epidemics, detecting threats early, and responding rapidly and effectively.



The Global Health Security Partnership is helping countries to report disease threats more quickly and effectively using tools like mobile phones. PATH/Gabe Bienczycki

Through the GHSP, PATH supports CDC and countries to:

- Improve **infectious disease surveillance** to ensure stronger and better linked systems that detect and report threats more rapidly, efficiently monitor trends, and produce actionable data for health programming.
- Strengthen **laboratory capacity** to utilize rapid, high-quality diagnostics, conduct integrated reporting, and build strong links with information systems.
- Foster **integrated information** systems that apply immunization program data, surveillance reporting, and laboratory diagnostics to promptly highlight areas of concern, ensure information flow throughout the health system, and rapidly trigger timely and informed responses.

BUILDING COUNTRY CAPACITY

In the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, PATH is supporting the establishment of the first emergency operations center in the country, which will serve to coordinate the prevention, detection, and rapid response teams for public health emergencies.

In **Senegal**, PATH is contributing to the development of a strategic plan for laboratories to strengthen biosafety and biosecurity capacity in order to improve disease surveillance and outbreak detection, including antimicrobial resistance. We are collaborating to develop a national laboratory network that will enhance coordination among diagnostic and surveillance laboratories. PATH also provides technical assistance to enhance infection prevention control in health facilities, and supports development of innovative technologies for monitoring and supervision, such as an e-learning tool for immunization.

In **Tanzania**, we are strengthening integrated multi-disease surveillance and response systems and supporting development of a national strategic plan to strengthen surveillance. PATH works to identify and fill gaps in current systems to detect and respond to outbreaks—for example, by providing technical support to implement an electronic integrated disease surveillance and reporting system, and conducting supportive supervision in health care facilities to improve reporting rates and data quality. PATH is also working to improve water, sanitation, and hygiene conditions in health facilities, with the aim to reduce hospital-acquired infections and decrease spread of enteric diseases linked to the overprescribing and misuse of antibiotics, both major drivers of antimicrobial resistance.

In **Vietnam**, PATH is supporting the development of a centralized and regional data collection system and data visualization platform to facilitate rapid decision-making to reduce the impact of outbreaks. We collaborate with national and regional emergency operations networks and provide technical support for monitoring and evaluation for event-based



Strengthening surveillance laboratories and linking them to health information systems is one focus of the Global Health Security Partnership. PATH/Gabe Biencycki

surveillance. Other areas of focus include infection prevention and control in hospitals, health care-associated infection surveillance, and antimicrobial resistance surveillance. In addition, PATH supports HIV-related work, including piloting of self-testing and evaluation of HIV care and treatment uptake among high-risk individuals, such as injection drug users.

THE GLOBAL HEALTH SECURITY AGENDA

The GHSP is part of a larger effort called the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSa). The agenda was launched in 2014 and is a growing partnership of nations, international organizations, and nongovernmental stakeholders focusing on progress toward a world safe and secure from public health threats. Global interconnectedness may bring new risks, but just as important are the greater opportunities to work together. Partnerships fostered by the GHSa will provide a model for sharing resources, expertise, and insight to meet our shared global goal of safety and health for all communities, everywhere.

For more information about the GHSP, please contact Project Director Linda Venczel at lvenczel@path.org.

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STREET ADDRESS
2201 Westlake Avenue
Suite 200
Seattle, WA 98121 USA

MAILING ADDRESS
PO Box 900922
Seattle, WA 98109 USA