

# Strategic and operational plan for coronavirus disease threat management

Advancing sustained, integrated coronavirus disease threat management: 2025-2030

## Context

Over five years since the detection of the first COVID-19 cases, SARS-CoV-2 continues to circulate globally, causing acute illness, hospitalization, and death, alongside prolonged negative impacts on individuals, health systems, and economies, including post-COVID-19 condition (PCC or Long COVID). While global population-level immunity has increased significantly through both infection and vaccination, the virus continues to evolve, challenging control efforts and underscoring the need for long-term, sustainable disease management. Confirming earlier warnings from MERS-CoV and SARS-CoV-1, SARS-CoV-2 has demonstrated the pandemic potential of coronaviruses, which remain one of the most consequential infectious disease threats of our time.

## Purpose of the strategic and operational plan

This plan sets out WHO's strategic and operational framework to support Member States in **the sustained, integrated, evidence-based management of coronavirus disease threats**, including COVID-19, MERS, and potential novel coronavirus diseases of public health importance. It emphasizes the long-term, routine management of coronavirus diseases, embedded within national healthcare and health emergency systems and aligned with broader respiratory disease management strategies and the [WHO Health Emergency Preparedness, Response and Resilience \(HEPR\) Framework](#).

The plan builds on and supersedes previous WHO strategic preparedness and response plans for COVID-19 and MERS. It is aligned with and advances [WHO's 14th General Programme of Work \(2025-28\)](#) and interlinks with other relevant strategic frameworks, including the [Quadripartite One Health Joint Plan of Action](#) and the [Immunization Agenda 2030](#), among others, and the [IHR Standing Recommendations for COVID-19](#).

## Strategic objectives

The plan aims to support and guide Member States and the broader global health community to:

- 1 Sustain** essential, evidence-based COVID-19 and other coronavirus disease threat management activities across core public health capabilities to reduce morbidity, mortality, and socio-economic disruption, right-sized to burden.
- 2 Integrate** coronavirus disease threat management into broader disease prevention and control programmes and systems, across all levels (local, national, regional, global), in particular with other respiratory diseases, like influenza and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).
- 3 Enhance** core capabilities as outlined in the HEPR Framework to identify, prioritize, and address operational gaps in coronavirus disease threat management.
- 4 Generate**, share, and apply evidence to close knowledge gaps and translate research and lessons learned into improved programmes, policies, and evidence-based guidance and control tools.

## Operationalizing the strategic objectives across core public health capabilities

The strategic objectives are operationalized across core public health capabilities, as organized under the five pillars of the WHO HEPR Framework:



**Collaborative surveillance:** Multi-source, multi-tiered surveillance systems for early detection, variant monitoring, and risk assessment of SARS-CoV-2, MERS-CoV, and novel coronaviruses, aligned with the One Health approach.



**Community protection:** Community-centred public health action empowering communities to make informed decisions that protect their health, including risk communication, community engagement, misinformation management, and context-driven population interventions.



**Safe and scalable care:** High-quality clinical management of patients with coronavirus diseases, including PCC, and other acute respiratory infections embedded within scalable clinical pathways and with infection prevention and control (IPC) standards across all levels of care.



**Access to and delivery of countermeasures:** Equitable, timely access to and uptake of safe and effective vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics able to prevent, detect, characterize, and reduce the severity of coronavirus diseases.



**Coordination:** National, regional, and global coordination mechanisms, networks, and partnerships enabling agile, multi-sectoral responses and information sharing relating to (re-)emerging coronavirus disease threats.

## Implementation approach

Implementation of the plan will follow a flexible, risk-based, and Member State-driven approach, recognizing national contexts vary greatly and that Member States are at different stages of coronavirus disease threat management capacity development.

WHO will continue to convene and coordinate global stakeholders, relevant networks, and advisory groups, develop evidence-based guidance and policy recommendations, and provide tailored support to assist Member States in building and sustaining core capabilities, in collaboration with other key partners.

Figure E1. Operationalizing the strategic objectives across core public health capabilities

