

# Fostering Resilience through Integrated Health Systems Strengthening



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# **Fostering Resilience through Integrated Health Systems Strengthening**

Fostering resilience through integrated health system strengthening: technical meeting report

(Fostering resilience through integrated health system strengthening series)

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# Foreword

The health and economic effects of the pandemic of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) are being felt globally and demonstrate that, while some countries are facing more devastating effects than others, no single health system was fully prepared to meet this challenge. Many countries are enduring simultaneous shocks and stressors to their health systems, such as climate events, conflicts and other infectious disease outbreaks. The short and long-term consequences of these shocks and stressors underscore the need for building health systems resilience with strong public health foundations to ensure and maintain the delivery of high-quality essential health services. The global community will need to build on this foundation of public health functions, while also drawing on resources from other sectors, to achieve universal health coverage and protect Global Health Security. We cannot choose one without the other. With a significant proportion of the world caught up in difficult situations, including protracted conflict, displacement, poverty and compromised human rights, the pandemic has also reconfirmed the truth that, in our interconnected world, no one is safe until we are all safe; reminding us that “there is no wealth without health”. An integrated approach to health systems strengthening is imperative to safeguard the economy, shared prosperity and well-being.

Moving forward, the global community needs to take concerted collaborative action at global, regional and national levels. This should begin with and be

centred around building resilient health systems based on Primary Health Care that prioritize Essential Public Health Functions. We need to capitalize on the current widespread political impetus and align “building back better” with a focus on establishing equitable and high-quality health systems as central to economic recovery and development at all levels.

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) co-hosted a strategic meeting on 14 April 2021 to examine this topic together and identify specific actionable steps to build an integrated approach to health system strengthening that brings together health security, humanitarian, disease-specific and life-course-specific objectives. This integrated approach should include translating lessons learned from public health emergencies into concrete action for health systems recovery and the reduction of siloed investments and programmes. This will create the sustainable impacts and efficient delivery that are the products of resilient health systems capable of withstanding 21st-century public health challenges.

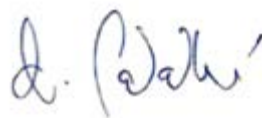
WHO and USAID look forward to collaborating, with other partners, on the shared objectives agreed during this meeting. Our partnership will set an example of a unified and coherent approach to strengthening countries’ health systems. Collaboration and engagement with partners, including the International Association of National Public Health Institutes (IANPHI) and the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) enables us to share our experiences and set the

direction for transformative joint work at country level, building on local institutions, capacities and health stewardships including development, humanitarian and disaster risk management institutions and coordination platforms.

We acknowledge and reaffirm the vital importance of the ongoing work between our organizations on health systems resilience and look forward to our integrated planning and country support.

**Jeremy Konyndyk**

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