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| 1 | Address the complete lifecycle of emergencies | 7 | Protect human rights |
| 2 | Define the triggering events | 8 | Integrate functioning health strategies |
| 3 | Balance strong and agile decision-making with meaningful oversight | 9 | Ensure flow of health data across all levels of governance |
| 4 | Fund adequately | 10 | Safeguard health care workers |
| 5 | Equip authorities with all relevant public health tools | 11 | Enforce the rules without imposing unjust penalties |
| 6 | Fulfill IHR obligations | 12 | Promote transparency |



8 Integrate functioning health strategies

To optimize the use of resources during a public health emergency, the law should build upon existing public health structures—such as [Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response \(IDSR\) systems](#)—and, in keeping with a [One Health approach](#), maintain coordination across the human, animal and environmental health sectors. IDSR is a strategy for implementing systematic identification, collection, collation, analysis and interpretation of disease occurrence and public health event data, for the purposes of taking timely and robust action. One Health is a collaborative, multisectoral and transdisciplinary approach working at the national and subnational levels.

KEY ELEMENTS

Builds on existing systems: Existing laws may govern procedures and systems for many public health functions, such as disease surveillance, contact tracing, death registration and disposal of infectious waste and human remains. The legal framework for a public health emergency should build upon these existing systems, rather than create parallel structures.

Fosters multi-sectoral, multi-agency response: Legal frameworks should ensure coordination among the health, animal, agriculture and environmental sectors, ideally building upon existing [One Health](#) and IDSR systems and strategies. This coordination should occur at both the national and subnational levels.

Supports continuity of essential services: Health systems may be challenged by increased demand during a public health emergency. To meet demand, routine and elective services may be suspended. However, the legal framework should [identify essential services](#)— such as immunizations, management of chronic diseases, reproductive health and childbirth, and core services for vulnerable populations—and ensure that these services are funded and continue during the public health emergency.

Equitably allocates scarce resources: Resources may need to be reallocated in order to meet increased demands on the health system, which may involve prioritizing some people or groups over others. The legal framework should ensure that allocation of scarce resources is done in accordance with [ethical principles](#), is fair, and addresses the needs of vulnerable and at-risk populations. The failure to protect vulnerable groups subjects them to higher risk and undermines the emergency response and broader public health goals.

ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Does your legal framework:

- Take advantage of and build on existing public health systems and procedures?
- Identify essential health services and ensure continuity during an emergency?
- Protect the needs of the most vulnerable and at-risk populations In the event scarce resources must be allocated?
- Provide a mechanism for coordination among relevant sectors and agencies at the national and sub-national levels?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- World Health Organization, [Maintaining Essential Health Services: Operational Guidance for the COVID-19 Context, Interim Guidance](#), June 2020.
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, [World Organization for Animal Health, and World Health Organization, Taking a Multisectoral, One Health Approach: A Tripartite Guide to Addressing Zoonotic Diseases in Countries](#), 2019.
- World Health Organization, Regional Office for Africa, [Technical Guidelines for Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response in the African Region](#): Third Edition, March 2019.