

**Member State mission briefing
WHO HQ, Geneva
9 April 2020**

Excellencies, dear colleagues and friends,

Today marks 100 days since WHO was notified of the first cases of what we now call COVID-19 in China.

Much has changed since we launched the first Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan two months ago.

The global spread of the virus has overwhelmed health systems, disrupted the global economy, and lead to widespread societal disruption.

The fatality rate is estimated to be 10 times higher than influenza.

More than 1.3 million people have been infected, and almost 80,000 people have lost their lives.

This pandemic is much more than a health crisis. It requires a whole-of government and whole-of-society response.

In the last 100 days, COVID-19 has shown us the damage it can mete out in wealthy nations.

We are yet to see the devastation it could wreak in poorer and more vulnerable countries. We're committed to doing everything we can to prevent that from happening.

A major reason that we declared a public health emergency of international concern in January was so countries and communities - especially those with weak health systems - would have time to prepare.

Without help and action now, poor countries and vulnerable communities could suffer massive devastation.

The window for containing the virus at the subnational and national level is closing in many countries. The infection numbers in Africa are relatively small now, but they are growing fast.

Today we are publishing our technical strategy update for the next phase of the response.

This strategy update will form the basis of our second Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan, which we will release in the coming days.

We have learned much about this new virus since we first encountered it at the start of the year. These hard-won lessons are reflected in the new strategy.

This update addresses the circumstances in lower- and middle-income countries and communities with weaker health systems and infrastructure, and especially in countries affected by conflict and for displaced people.

It is built on five strategic objectives:

To mobilize all sectors and communities;

To control sporadic cases and clusters and prevent community transmission;

To suppress community transmission where it is occurring;

To reduce mortality through appropriate care;

And to develop safe and effective vaccines and therapeutics.

These strategic objectives must be supported by tailored national strategies to find, test, isolate and care for every case, and trace every contact.

In turn, national strategies must be supported at the international level in five key areas. These are the five areas WHO is focused on:

First, to support countries to build their capacities to prepare and respond;

Second, to provide epidemiological analysis and risk communication;

Third, to coordinate the global supply chain;

Fourth, to provide technical expertise and mobilize the health workforce;

And fifth, to accelerate research, innovation and knowledge sharing.

Our second Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan will estimate the resources needed to implement national and international strategies during the next phase of the response.

I want to thank all Member States and partners who have responded to our first Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan. More than US\$800 million has been pledged or received.

We're all in this together, and we still have a long way to go.

As I said in the press conference yesterday, we must quarantine politicizing this virus. We have to work together, and we have no time to waste.

Our singular focus is on working to serve all people to save lives and stop the pandemic.

I thank you.