



**The  
Pandemic  
Fund**  
FOR A RESILIENT WORLD

# NEWSLETTER



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- 🕒 Pandemic Preparedness M&E Workshop

June, 2025



**World Health  
Organization**

South Africa

# SOUTH AFRICA CONVENES FIRST NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING TO INITIATE PANDEMIC FUND IMPLEMENTATION

**April 2025 – Pretoria** South Africa has officially launched the implementation of the Pandemic Fund initiative, marking a key milestone in the country's journey toward strengthening pandemic preparedness and response systems.

The inaugural National Steering Committee (NSC) meeting, held virtually, brought together representatives from national ministries, the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, FAO, and other key partners. Co-chaired by Dr. Anban Pillay (Deputy Director General, National Department of Health) and Ms. Shenaaz El-Halabi (WHO Representative to South Africa), the meeting set the tone for a nationally owned, collaborative, and strategically guided rollout of the Pandemic Fund in the country.

In her remarks, Ms. El-Halabi stressed the importance of unity and vision:

“This initiative is about collective action. It’s about ensuring that South Africa leverages the Pandemic Fund to close critical health security gaps while strengthening surveillance, workforce development, and emergency response mechanisms.”

The NSC, now established as the national oversight body, will provide strategic direction, foster transparency, and ensure alignment with national health priorities. Delivery partners also shared progress on inception activities, discussed timelines, and committed to coordinated implementation.

As one of the implementing entities, WHO reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the government through technical expertise, coordination, and strategic oversight. The NSC will convene regularly to review progress and promote synergy with other ongoing health security investments.

Funded by the World Bank, the Pandemic Fund provides vital financial support to countries to improve pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response capacities. South Africa now joins global efforts in building resilient, future-ready health systems that protect communities from emerging threats.

**Pandemic Fund Grant in South Africa National Steering Committee Meeting**

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*Building a Resilient Future: Strengthening Pandemic Prevention Preparedness and Response through a One Health Approach (Single Country)*

**Strengthening One Health disease surveillance and response in Southern Africa – a strategy against climate-driven disease outbreaks (Multi-Country)**

**Background and Objectives of the meeting**

**03 April 2025** A screenshot of participants

**Participants**

- NAZRIEV, Faridun
- BA Ahmadu, Babagana (FAOZA) (...)
- MX CHABANE XABA, Matchidiso
- CM Christine Muhigana (External)
- DP Dr Anban Pillay (External)
- EL-HALABI, Shenaaz
- UI IKENYEI, Uche
- JK Khunou, Jacoray (FAOZA) (Unv...
- MAKADZANGE, Kevin
- MR Marian Roberts (External)
- LM Mlati, Lot (FAOZA) (Unverified)
- SM MOKODENA, Sibongile Petunia
- NM Mokone, Neo (FAOZA) (Unveri...
- DM MOONASARI, Devanand
- TN NEMUNGADI, Takalani
- SG Sufang Guo (External)

Logos at the bottom: health, agriculture, land reform & rural development, forestry, fisheries & the environment, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, unicef for every child, World Health Organization.



# STRENGTHENING GAUTENG'S EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS THROUGH MULTI-HAZARD CONTINGENCY PLANNING

**June 2025 - Gauteng,** World Health Organization (WHO), in collaboration with the National Department of Health (NDoH) and the Gauteng Department of Health, convened a five-day contingency planning workshop aimed at enhancing Gauteng Province's capacity to prepare for and respond to high-risk hazards.

With technical support from the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) and Jhpiego South Africa the workshop built on the findings of the Strategic Tool for Assessing Risks (STAR) workshop held in October 2024, which identified priority hazards that could significantly impact health systems in the province.

Participants from national, provincial, and local health authorities worked together to develop comprehensive multi-hazard contingency plans, to ensure that Gauteng is better prepared to respond to emergencies ranging from disease outbreaks to natural disasters.

The initiative aligned with international standards and frameworks including the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005)

WHO's Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (HEPR) framework, and the Framework for Strengthening Health Emergency Preparedness in Cities and Urban Settings.

"This exercise underscores the importance of coordinated planning at all levels of the health system. With multi-sectoral engagement, we're building a future where health emergencies are met with swift, strategic action," said Dr. Joseph Wamala, WHO South Africa EPR Lead.

The workshop also served as a platform to foster collaboration among key stakeholders, strengthen risk communication pathways, and ensure timely response mechanisms were in place for future emergencies.

Through this initiative, WHO's ongoing support is contributing to South Africa's efforts to strengthen a resilient and responsive health system one that is better equipped to withstand public health threats and protect communities



Participants in a group photo



## MPUMALANGA TESTS ITS READINESS: WHO SUPPORTS MULTI-HAZARD HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



Cross-section of participants

According to the WHO Project Lead, the workshop was “a collaborative effort to ensure South Africa has a robust multi-hazard approach to respond to public health issues,” reinforcing the country’s commitment to international standards such as the IHR (2005) and WHO’s Emergency Preparedness and Response Framework.

The initiative not only helped identify strengths and gaps in the province’s existing emergency plans but also reinforced the importance of coordinated response mechanisms. Mr. Mandla Zwane from the provincial health department noted, “The proactive testing of our plans is not just an exercise; it’s an investment in saving lives when emergencies strike.”

Moving forward, Mpumalanga and its partners are committed to implementing the lessons learned, updating contingency plans, and training frontline staff to ensure readiness for any future health threat.

**June 2025, Mpumalanga** – In a major stride toward building public health resilience, the World Health Organization (WHO), in partnership with the Mpumalanga Department of Health, successfully conducted a Contingency Plan Testing Workshop aimed at strengthening the province’s response to public health emergencies.

The week-long workshop brought together key players from provincial and district health departments, the NICD, SAHMS, IFRC, and other partners. Participants engaged in rigorous table-top exercises and simulations designed to test Mpumalanga’s multi-hazard public health contingency plans—including responses to disease outbreaks such as cholera and malaria, and climate-related hazards like floods.

“The proactive testing of our plans is not just an exercise; it’s an investment in saving lives when emergencies strike. - Mr. Zwane.”



Participants in a group photo



## KWAZULU-NATAL STRENGTHENS HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS THROUGH WHO-LED SIMULATION WORKSHOP



Participants during a visit to the PHEOC in Kwazulu Natal

In a major stride toward bolstering South Africa's health security, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), hosted a rigorous Contingency Plan Testing Workshop from 09–14 June 2025 in Durban.

The workshop brought together national and provincial health and disaster management leaders and border management authority, representatives from the NICD, JHPIEGO, and district health teams for a hands-on learning experience through table-top exercises. The goal: to test and strengthen multi-hazard and malaria contingency plan addressing emergencies such as cholera outbreaks and climate-related disasters like floods.

“This workshop exemplifies how global expertise and local leadership can unite to create a robust, multi-hazard response system,” said Dr. Moonasar, WHO Project Lead. “KwaZulu-Natal is setting a benchmark for proactive health emergency preparedness.”

Participants visited the Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC), assessed current

response protocols, and developed strategies to improve coordination, communication, and rapid containment efforts. Ms. Thembelihle Maphalala, Director of Health Services in iLembe District, emphasized the urgency: “Kwazulu Natal has been experiencing a lot of public health emergencies, possibly due to climate change, and having this workshop will be helpful in ensuring the province is better prepared for response.”

The Provincial Disaster Management team committed to driving collaboration and operationalizing updated contingency plans, while WHO and partners pledged ongoing technical support, staff training, and community engagement.

“Together, we are not just preparing for emergencies, we are preventing them,” said Ms. Babongile Mhlongo, reflecting on the lasting impact of the initiative.

KwaZulu-Natal's experience now serves as a blueprint for strengthening health emergency preparedness across South Africa.



## PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS M&E WORKSHOP SETS STAGE FOR SUCCESS IN SOUTH AFRICA



Participants in a group photo at the M&E workshop

WHO South Africa, in partnership with the National Department of Health and key organizations including Jhpiego and CHAI, convened a pivotal Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) workshop in Pretoria to boost the impact of the Pandemic Fund grant.

The workshop brought together nearly 30 participants from delivery partners and implementing entities including; UNICEF, FAO, NICD, and others—to align strategies and strengthen accountability for pandemic preparedness initiatives.

Over the three-day workshop, participants: Reviewed and refined key project indicators, Introduced standardized reporting templates, Established a dedicated M&E Technical Working Group (TWG) to monitor performance across the grant's three priority areas including; Surveillance, Laboratory Systems, and Human Resources for Health (HRH).

The sessions also contributed to the development of South Africa's second-quarter Pandemic Fund report and enabled delivery partners to align on next steps toward measurable outcomes and improved coordination.

"It was refreshing to see such collaborative energy. Everyone was fully engaged, which made our outputs all the more meaningful."

– Dr. Uche Ikenyei, Strategic Information Officer, WHO South Africa

This M&E workshop is a significant milestone for the Pandemic Fund initiative, reinforcing South Africa's commitment to transparency, data-driven planning, and effective implementation. The outcomes of this gathering have set a strong foundation for achieving the fund's overarching goal—a more resilient and responsive health system for all.

## LEAD PARTNERS



## IMPLEMENTING ENTITIES



### Acknowledgements

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## PHOTO GALLERY

Photos: Visit to PHEOC and group participants. of the Contingency Plan Testing Workshop in Kwazulu Natal Province

