

IIMHL Leadership Briefing LVII

COVID-19 and International Actions for the Future

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Janet Peters

Introduction

Many international agencies are emphasising the need to work collaboratively across countries to combat COVID-19. The three major international reports set out in the briefing describe both the value and the importance of doing this.

Firstly, the research from the International Chamber of Commerce shows that no economy can fully recover from the pandemic until vaccines are equally accessible in all countries.

Secondly, research led by the Kings Fund examined information across sixteen disasters from many countries. It suggests four actions that need to occur in order to ameliorate the effects of serious disasters.

The third report from the World Health Organisation (WHO) outlines the strategic plan and key actions at national, regional, and global levels needed to suppress transmission, protect the vulnerable, reduce mortality and morbidity, and accelerate the development of the tools the world needs to turn the tide against the disease.

International Chamber of Commerce: The Economic Case for Global Vaccinations

2021

A study commissioned by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Research Foundation has found that the global economy stands to lose as much as US \$9.2 trillion if governments fail to ensure that developing economies have access to COVID-19 vaccines.

Evidence to date suggests that access to vaccines is likely to be highly uneven across countries. Advanced economies have in recent months pursued a policy of securing the global supply of frontrunner vaccines – with the result that supplies in low and middle income countries may be more limited.

A new study highlights the major risks to the global economy inherent in this uncoordinated approach to vaccine access. Using a sophisticated model – that builds upon an earlier [NBER and IMF Working Paper](#) – to properly assess the economic toll of a prolonged pandemic, the research shows that no economy can recover fully from the COVID-19 pandemic until vaccines are equally accessible in all countries.

In short, advanced economies that can vaccinate all of their citizens are shown to remain at risk of a sluggish recovery with a drag on Gross Domestic Product if infection continues to spread unabated in low and middle income countries with developing economies. These losses dwarf the donor finance needed to enable vaccines to be procured for everyone, everywhere, thus making a clear “investment case” for a coordinated global approach to distribution.

<https://iccwbo.org/publication/the-economic-case-for-global-vaccinations/>

The Kings Fund: Covid-19 recovery and resilience: What can health and care learn from other disasters?

February 2021

This study looked at thirteen disasters across several countries. The research found that recovery should focus on understanding what individuals and communities need to be able to cope with the impacts of a disaster, and be in a better position to withstand the next one. It also stresses that recovery will be a long haul – probably covering a 10–15 year timeframe – and know that progress will not be linear.

Local community groups and grassroots organisations play a critical role in creating and maintaining those human connections that are essential for successful recovery. Many of these groups will struggle to survive and sustain their impact during Covid-19 and beyond, so infrastructure, funding and support that can anticipate and manage that risk is essential. Recovery can take many years, if not decades, so it's important to consider how this support will be maintained in the long term.

In the aftermath of a traumatic event, successful recovery doesn't just happen. The Kings Fund research suggests four priorities that will require conscious attention and action.

1. Putting mental health and wellbeing at the forefront of recovery efforts.
2. Ensuring communities are not left behind.
3. Making collaboration work.
4. Prioritising workforce wellbeing.

<https://features.kingsfund.org.uk/2021/02/covid-19-recovery-resilience-health-care/>

WHO: COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan

2021

In a little over 12 months the pandemic has claimed more than two million lives and damaged the economic and social fabric of every society. Across the world the pandemic has thrown existing inequalities into stark relief. WHO suggests that progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals has stalled, and in some cases may have reversed. Up to 100 million people have slipped into extreme poverty, the first rise in global poverty in more than two decades. Addressing the impact of COVID-19 requires coordinated global action.

In 2020, WHO's Strategic preparedness and response plan for COVID-19 set out the key actions at national, regional, and global levels needed to suppress transmission, protect the vulnerable, reduce mortality and morbidity, and accelerate the development of the tools the world needs to turn the tide against the disease.

The evidence is clear: solidarity, equity, and global leadership are the only routes out of the pandemic. WHO's contribution to the COVID-19 Strategic preparedness and response plan 2021, and the ACT-Accelerator within it, provides the foundation on which we can build an effective, equitable response together, and end the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This document, the COVID-19 SPRP 2021 is intended to help guide the public health response to COVID-19 at national and subnational levels, and to update the global strategic priorities in support of this effort.

- Part I of this document gives a brief overview of the global epidemiological situation as we enter the first quarter of 2021, and summarizes the main challenges as we look forward.
- Part II sets out the strategic objectives for 2021, and describes the broad response strategy – from national level to global and regional coordination – through which we will achieve those objectives together: as individuals, families, communities, countries, regional and international organizations, and as partners, in solidarity.

https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/3rd-edl-submissions/who_sprp-2021final18022021.pdf?sfvrsn=ce5092f9_1&download=true