GLOBAL HEALTH SECURITY AGENDA INVESTMENTS
SAVE AMERICAN LIVES
International Public Health Laboratories Keep Outbreaks from Becoming Global Threats

The Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) is an initiative that helps equip countries around the world to better respond to disease outbreaks so they do not become global epidemics. By strengthening systems worldwide, GHSA ultimately protects the health of Americans at home. The goals of GHSA are echoed in the White House’s 2019 Biodefense Strategy:

“It is a vital interest of the United States to manage the risk of biological incidents. In today’s interconnected world, biological incidents have the potential to cost thousands of American lives, cause significant anxiety, and greatly impact travel and trade.”

— White House’s 2019 Biodefense Strategy

PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORIES: A CORNERSTONE OF GHSA

Public health laboratories play a foundational role in the three goals of GHSA: prevent, detect and respond to disease outbreaks. The testing done by these laboratories is essential for identifying disease and getting patients into treatment, and informs public health response with real-time data.

PREVENT
Ensure Safe Handling of Specimens
To ensure specimens are shipped and tested appropriately, staff are trained in biosafety and proper laboratory practices. This:

- Avoids accidental or malicious release of harmful agents
- Prevents laboratory acquired infections

DETECT
Increase Access to Testing
As laboratories expand their testing, improve testing accuracy and introduce new instrumentation, they are able to increase their testing capability and capacity. This:

- Identifies outbreaks earlier and accelerates testing to minimize specimen backlog
- Increases the number of diseases that can be detected
- Expands the ability to test new emerging threats and pathogens

RESPOND
Provide Real-Time Test Results
Electronic laboratory data systems provide quick, efficient and accurate tracking and analysis of test results and laboratory data. They also report test results back to clinicians and public health officials to determine patient care and public health action. This:

- Informs outbreak responses and public health interventions in real-time
- Guides timely international preparation and engagement

15
GHSA-funded countries have trained staff on biosafety and biosecurity to prevent avoidable infection.

16
GHSA-funded countries have detected dangerous pathogens using new equipment and capabilities.

16
GHSA-funded countries have strengthened response coordination and shared information across public health, animal health and law enforcement.
Several recent disease outbreaks have reached the US after Americans brought them back from affected areas. The anticipated decrease in GHSA funding would mean that these countries will be less able to equip themselves with the supplies, technology and training needed to protect their people—and, by extension, the rest of the world—from future pandemics.

CUTS TO GHSA FUNDING ENDANGER AMERICAN LIVES

One-time Ebola funding, distributed in Fiscal Year 2015 by the federal government, enabled great strides in building global public health laboratory capacity. Gains will erode at the end of Fiscal Year 2019 when the funds run dry. Global public health cannot afford to play “catch-up” during an outbreak, and America may not be able to stay ahead of the next epidemic.

Outbreaks will rapidly become uncontrollable and spread to the US

Laboratory infrastructure will be easily overwhelmed by large volumes of testing

Weaponization of biological agents will be harder to prevent and detect

THE RISKS OF 65% LESS GHSA FUNDING

$200 MILLION FUNDING GAP

Base GHSA Funding (via US Dept. of State)

Supplemental GHSA Funding

Supplemental Ebola Funding

Total CDC GHSA Funding (Millions)

0

$100

$200

$300

'13 '14 '15 '16 '17 '18 '19 '20

House Level

Fiscal Year

Drug-Resistant Malaria

H1N1

Ebola

SARS

Zika

GHSA-funded Countries