

# Global Preparedness: Disease Knows No Borders

*An outbreak in another country can reach the United States in a matter of hours. CDC works with partners around the world to contain these threats before they reach American shores.*



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## Why It Matters:

Achieving health security at home often starts abroad. CDC's Division of Emergency Operations (DEO) helps countries and regional partners develop strong emergency management programs through technical assistance, training, mentoring, and developing response frameworks. By helping countries to prepare for, anticipate, and respond to all forms of public health threats, CDC is able to:



Stop health threats at their source before they spread to the United States or other countries.



Contain disruptive global disease outbreaks.



Use global data to inform about disease prevention in the United States and around the world.



Save lives and improve health at home and abroad.

## Public Health Emergency Management Around the World

Improving the ability of other countries to effectively lead and manage their responses can reduce the impact of those emergencies on the rest of the world. CDC helps contain public health threats at their source by partnering with other nations to build and strengthen their response capabilities. CDC does this through:

- **Infrastructure:** Helping countries establish emergency operations centers and other infrastructure needed to support emergency responses.
- **Processes and Plans:** Collaborating with other countries to create sustainable response systems and standardized response activities to identify gaps and address them before a health emergency strikes.
- **Workforce:** Training world leaders through U.S.-based and international courses to provide the skills needed to lead and manage during an emergency.
- **Partnerships:** Fostering networks with other countries and sharing best practices to coordinate effectively during times of crisis.



### Minimizing Risks Abroad

DEO helps train countries and regional partners to identify region-specific public health risks and capacity development needs. For instance, DEO conducted a 4-day Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment workshop for 55 national and provincial representatives from Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, and Thailand. This risk assessment guided local stakeholders' resource allocation and strategy decisions by helping to identify threats and hazards along their borders.



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## Public Health Emergency Management in Action

CDC's Public Health Emergency Management (PHEM) Fellowship program strengthens capacity for partner countries to counter public health threats when they arise. This fellowship helps public health preparedness and response professionals in partner countries implement emergency management principles through intensive training, mentorship, and technical assistance.

PHEM Fellowship alumni provide expertise as the first line of defense against health emergency threats in their home countries. These leaders are also able to provide country-specific information when emerging issues arise, improving CDC's situational awareness and global response capacity.

### Valuable Training in Southeast Asia

In 2024, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), in partnership with CDC, launched an Emerging Leaders Program to strengthen regional PHEM capacity. PHEM Fellowship alumni served in critical design, implementation, and mentorship roles for the program, helping to more than double the number of trained PHEM leaders across the region. This partnership has strengthened public health systems and emergency preparedness while deepening collaboration and trust throughout the ASEAN member states. DEO's targeted investment in training and capacity development has resulted in a network of PHEM professionals able to prepare and respond to public health emergencies in Southeast Asia.

### Partnerships in Cameroon

From 2020 to 2025, U.S. government agencies collaborated with partners local PHEM Fellowship alumni to strengthen PHEM capacity across Cameroon. CDC and the Defense Threat Reduction Agency's Biological Threat Reduction Program coordinated with the alumni to train regional PHEM professionals. The PHEM Fellowship alumni utilized knowledge gained from their training to provide multiple levels of instruction, including conducting risk assessments in each region. The alumni designed and conducted a regional capstone exercise at the conclusion of each training cycle. As a result of this partnership, each of Cameroon's 10 regions now has 25 fully trained PHEM professionals ready to coordinate preparedness and response activities.

### Leadership and Expertise Where it Matters

As of 2025, CDC has trained 275 public health and medical professionals from 67 countries as part of the PHEM Fellowship. Graduates return to their home countries ready and able to lead their own more robust PHEM programs.

PHEM Fellowship alumni have gone on to provide leadership through:

- Serving as Incident Manager for national-level Viral Hemorrhagic Fever responses.
- Leading multi-country exercises to test cross-border notification systems designed to track emerging events.
- Directing national and regional PHEM programs.

