Governance in Health Emergency Preparedness

Health and Equity through Multi-Level Governance

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Lessons from COVID-19 in Emergency Preparedness

• No country was fully prepared for an emergency of this scale and speed
  – Including countries with reported high International Health Regulation (2005) core capacity scores
  – Including countries with mature national health system indices

• A rethink of the necessary components of preparedness and response
  – Leadership, governance and coordination
  – Community engagement and trust
  – Essential public health functions (e.g. Contact tracing, Isolation, Quarantine)
  – Resilient health systems (including continued provision of essential health services)
Capacity disparities at National, Subnational and Local Levels

• Effective implementation of preparedness and response begins in local communities

• COVID-19 has highlighted weak points in countries

• COVID-19 has disproportionately affected cities and urban areas

• Many local authorities have governance and policy-making responsibilities
Guidance and Checklist for Cities

- WHO published an interim guidance and checklist for cities in strengthening preparedness for COVID-19 and beyond

https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/331896
Areas of focus for city governments

- Four areas of focus
  - **Coordinated local plans** in preparation for effective responses to health risks and impacts;
  - **Risk and crisis communication and community engagement** that encourage compliance with measures;
  - **Contextually appropriate approaches to public health measures**, especially physical distancing, hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette; and
  - **Access** to health care services for COVID-19 and the **continuation** of essential services.
Governance and Coordination – National to Local

• Adapted to national regulatory frameworks, the competences of subnational actors, and local social, cultural and economic contexts.

• High level objectives for local coordination and planning
  – Establish a local multisectoral coordination mechanism
  – Work with other levels of government
  – Map local vulnerabilities, capacities and resources
  – Develop and refine local action plans
  – Test plans and document lessons