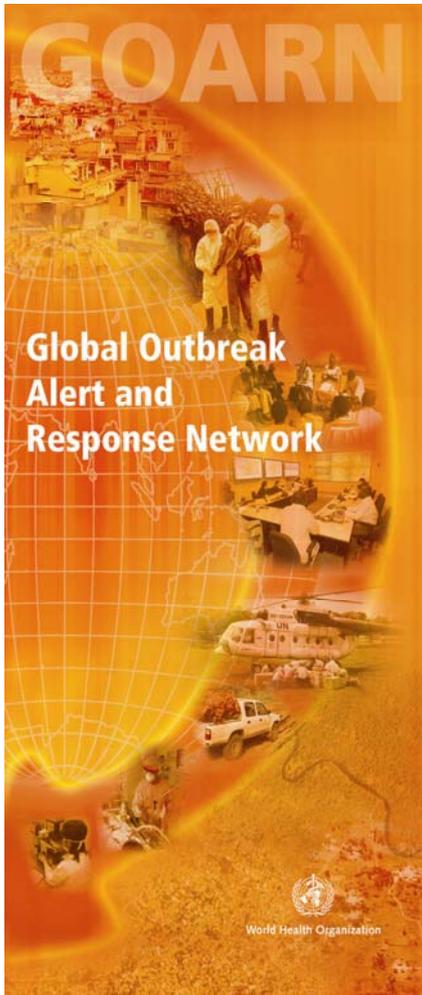


Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network-GOARN

Partnership in Outbreak Response



Today, there is growing recognition that an outbreak anywhere can potentially represent an emergency of international public health concern.

Outbreaks threaten the health of the world's population. They require regional and global alert and response mechanisms to ensure rapid access to technical advice and resources and to support national public health capacity.

No single institution or country has all of the capacities to respond to international public health emergencies caused by epidemics and by new and emerging infectious diseases.

WHO ensures that countries have rapid access to the most appropriate experts and resources for outbreak response through the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN). GOARN was created in April 2000 to improve the coordination of international outbreak responses and to provide an operational framework to focus the delivery of support to countries.

GOARN's primary aims are to:

- Assist countries with disease control efforts by ensuring rapid and appropriate technical support to affected populations.
- Investigate and characterize events and assess risks of rapidly emerging epidemic disease threats.
- Support national outbreak preparedness by ensuring that responses contribute to sustained containment of epidemic threats.

Since 2000, WHO and GOARN has responded to over 50 events worldwide with over 400 experts providing field support to some 40 countries.

GOARN has helped to build consensus on guiding principles for international outbreak alert and response and to establish operational protocols to standardize field logistics, security, communications, and streamlined administrative processes to ensure rapid mobilization of field teams. WHO has also developed its capacity at all levels, with regional and sub-regional response teams initiating field operations with GOARN partners.

New strategic areas are being developed over the next two years to increase GOARN's effectiveness:

- Strengthening the network composition and regional focus to rapidly adapt and draw upon multi-disciplinary support from GOARN.
- Developing further specific capabilities in outbreak response team leadership, integrated data management, logistics and communications and field-based administrative procedures and protocols.
- Refining WHO/GOARN's expert collaboration and virtual networking for international technical collaboration.

For further information, contact: goarn@who.int