

Division of Global Health Protection

National Public Health Institutes

Creating Sustainable Homes for Public Health Disease Prevention and Control



NCDC leadership and staff in the EOC for the daily review of COVID-19 data and response duties. Photo: Jeremiah Agenyi

National Public Health Institutes (NPHIs) are CDC-like government or government-aligned agencies that provide science-based leadership and coordination for public health. CDC's Division of Global Health Protection (DGHP) applies its expertise to support countries organizing their own public health activities into a sustainable NPHI.

Why are NPHIs Important?

NPHIs serve as a home to organize and link a country's public health activities under one "roof" facilitating greater collaboration.

Having an NPHI enables a country to more effectively prevent, detect, and respond to public health threats that can cost lives, cause political and economic instability, and spread to neighboring countries. Strong NPHIs can help sustain partner investments, as well as minimize reliance on current and future U.S. and other external assistance.

NPHIs serve as focal points to:

- Generate and share knowledge, data, and scientific evidence
- Assess and track people's health, including during emergencies
- Improve policies and delivery of public health services
- Use limited resources more efficiently
- Lead action to address public health issues
- Serve as strong collaborative partners for global health security activities

Ministry of Health **without**
a National Public Health Institute (NPHI)



Ministry of Health **with**
a National Public Health Institute (NPHI)



How We Work

Since 2011, CDC's DGHP has worked with over 25 countries strengthening NPHIs where they do exist, helping develop NPHIs where none exist, and supporting early discussions when countries are considering NPHI development. DGHP utilizes technical expertise from across CDC and international partners to tailor programming to the specific country context.

DGHP and partners provide technical guidance and support to help countries:

- Develop strategic and operational plans
- Prioritize public health activities to more efficiently utilize limited resources
- Map existing public health systems
- Strengthen public health capacities such as surveillance, lab, workforce, and emergency management
- Demonstrate NPHI value by identifying quick wins
- Utilize the NPHI Staged Development Tool to identify and prioritize areas for NPHI strengthening



Training National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL) engineers in a biosafety cabinet certification program supported by CDC's NPHI Program through a partnership with Association of Public Health Laboratories and Eagleson Institute. Photo: National Public Health Institute of Liberia

Our Impact

The value of DGHP's efforts in working to establish new NPHIs or strengthen existing NPHIs often becomes clear in emergencies, when coordination is necessary. Government leaders and partners know who to call when communications are consolidated. NPHIs can activate rapid response teams, implement mass vaccination campaigns, institute emergency surveillance systems, and communicate with the public.

DGHP's support helps NPHIs around the world build the organizational and technical capacities that help them to quickly pivot when disaster strikes.

"The individual components of an outbreak response, whether an emergency operation center, laboratory, surveillance system, or risk communication — none of these components would lead to greater preparedness if they did not operate within an institution with a mandate to act." — Dr. Chikwe Ihekweazu, Director General, Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC)

Closing the Gap:

Moving Forward

DGHP has made tremendous strides working around the world on NPHI development. Countries are increasingly identifying the need for NPHIs as public health emergencies underscore the importance of collaboration and leadership. **DGHP will continue to work with individual countries and regionally to strengthen the NPHI network so countries can improve their public health systems through NPHIs.**

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To learn more about DGHP visit: www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/healthprotection

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