



G20

SOUTH AFRICA 2025



Solidarity

Equality

Sustainability

SUMMARY: OPERATIONAL PLAYBOOK FOR PANDEMIC RESPONSE FINANCING

Background

The Operational Playbook (“Playbook”) is a central piece of the multi-year workplan of the G20 Joint Finance Health Task Force (JFHTF). It was first developed in response to the New Delhi Leaders’ Declaration, which called for “optimised, better-coordinated, and suitably enhanced financing mechanisms for pandemic responses.” Under successive G20 Presidencies – India, Brazil, and South Africa – the Playbook has evolved into a non-binding, living reference tool to guide governments, international organisations, financial institutions, and other stakeholders in improving the speed, scale, and coordination of pandemic response financing. The Playbook builds on the analysis from the Response Financing Mapping paper and previous iterations of the Operational Playbook (September 2024 and, May 2025), as well as the outcomes of the Pandemic Response Financing Simulation Exercise during G20 4th Finance and Central Bank Deputies (FCBD) Meeting in July. It draws on lessons learned from responses to COVID-19, Mpox, and other large-scale outbreaks, as well as an extensive consultations across the G20 Joint Finance Health Task Force (JFHTF). It incorporates feedback from governments, international organisations, multilateral development banks, and global health initiatives.

Recent global agreements have also shaped its development. Amendments to the International Health Regulations (IHR, 2005) adopted in 2024, alongside the Pandemic Agreement (May 2025) – adopted and now open for ratification by member states, create a new Coordinating Financial Mechanism aimed at ensuring sustainable financing and timely surge support. The Playbook is complementary to these developments and to broader agendas such as the Lusaka Agenda on health systems financing and the “100 Day Mission” on medical countermeasures.

Key Insights and Actions

The Playbook highlights actions to improve speed, sufficiency, sequencing, and coordination of financing for pandemic response. Its scenario-based approach sets out considerations across different phases of an outbreak, with attention to domestic financing, external sources, and the role of international partners.

Key themes include:

- **Domestic Readiness:** Strengthening coordination between ministries of finance and health; ensuring access to small, flexible funds for early response; and reinforcing fiscal tools such as contingency budgets and credit lines.
- **International Engagement:** Developing pre-agreements with International Financial Institutions (IFIs), Global Health Initiatives (GHIs), and regional bodies to accelerate disbursement and reduce transaction costs.
- **Medical Countermeasures (MCMs):** Advancing coordination platforms for equitable and timely access to diagnostics, therapeutics, and vaccines.
- **Macroeconomic Resilience:** Leveraging IMF and MDB tools for broader economic and social response measures alongside health interventions.
- **Coordination:** Enhancing transparency, avoiding duplication, and strengthening multi-level coordination across domestic, regional, and global partners.

- **Equity and Inclusion:** Embedding equity considerations in governance and financing decisions to address vulnerabilities and ensure access for low- and middle-income countries.

Updates Following Discussion and Comments From G20 Members

The draft of May 2025 of the Playbook was presented at the 2nd JFHTF meeting on May 30, 2025 and subsequently noted by Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors at the 3rd meeting in July¹. Further discussions and consultation with members took place in the Day Zero Financing workshop in March while testing its application during the deputies-level simulation exercise in July 2025. The Playbook is broadly supported as a valuable tool to outline actions for policymakers to consider and adapt to their national contexts.

We thank G20 members for their comments and feedback. The Playbook is revised to provide mapping of external response financing resources, pandemic response financing checklist, addition and expansion of different pandemic scenarios, and the application of the financing landscape to the outbreak scenarios.

Next Steps

The Playbook is intended as a living document, to be periodically updated as financing instruments and institutional arrangements evolve. Based on JFHTF consultations and member feedback, areas for future development may potentially include analytical connections with the Framework for Economic Vulnerabilities and Risks (FEVR), summaries of disbursement protocols with triggers, dissemination and communication strategies, and regional focus. Ministers are invited to endorse the continued development and application of the Operational Playbook to ensure pandemic preparedness remains a priority across sectors and financing streams.

Outbreak Archetypes and Phases

OUTBREAK ARCHETYPE	DURATION OF PANDEMIC PHASES			
	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
A (Respiratory)	1 – 2 weeks	2 – 4 weeks	1 month – 36 months	36 + months
B (Fluid-transmitted)	1 – 6 weeks	6 – 12 weeks	3 months – 18 months	18 + months
C (Vector-borne)	1 – 6 weeks	6 weeks – 6 months	6 months – 12 months	12 + months

¹ Finance Track Communiqué, G20 3rd Finance Minister and Central Bank Governors Meeting (July, 2025); Durban, South Africa

Sequential Checklist for Pandemic Response Financing





