CDC

GLOBAL EMERGENCY ALERT AND RESPONSE SERVICE (GEARS)

DETECTS AND RESPONDS TO PUBLIC HEALTH THREATS WORLDWIDE

When infectious disease outbreaks or other health threats occur, having timely and accurate information and well-trained responders on the ground saves lives.

CDC EIS Officer LCDR Kerton Victory is screened for fever symptoms by a healthcare worker before entering a building in Guinea during the West Africa Ebola epidemic.

The Global Emergency Alert and Response Service (GEARS) in the Division of Global Health Protection (DGHP) combines the critical functions of the Global Disease Detection Operations Center (GDDOC) and the Global Rapid Response Team (GRRT) into a "one stop shop" that allows for a seamless transition between disease detection and response activities.

HOW GEARS WORKS

GDDOC disease detection specialists work 24/7 using event-based public health surveillance to track health threats across the globe and gather information for public health experts to quickly respond to outbreaks before they become pandemics. On any given day, a diverse team of CDC staff, including medical epidemiologists, data analysts, and zoonotic disease experts in the GDDOC daily monitor between 30-40 different public health threats globally.

With a roster of over 490 primarily volunteer responders, GRRT enables CDC experts to deploy within 72 hours, responding to both international and domestic emergencies. Responders on the GRRT receive all trainings, passports, and medical clearances needed to be able to rapidly deploy.

GRRT provides surge capacity through a pool of trained CDC responders with expertise in a variety of areas including emergency response, partner coordination, epidemiology, field logistics, laboratory, management, rapid assessment, risk communication, and surveillance. GRRT also works with countries to build their capacity to respond to disease outbreaks at their source by helping to establish in-country rapid response teams and emergency operations centers.

GDDOC HAS REPORTED

1,800 events and over 1,200 of international importance including

200+ diseases in over

240+ countries and territories.

OUR IMPACT

Since its inception in 2007, GDDOC has reported over 1,800 events (over 1,200 of international importance) including more than 200 different diseases in over 240 countries and territories.
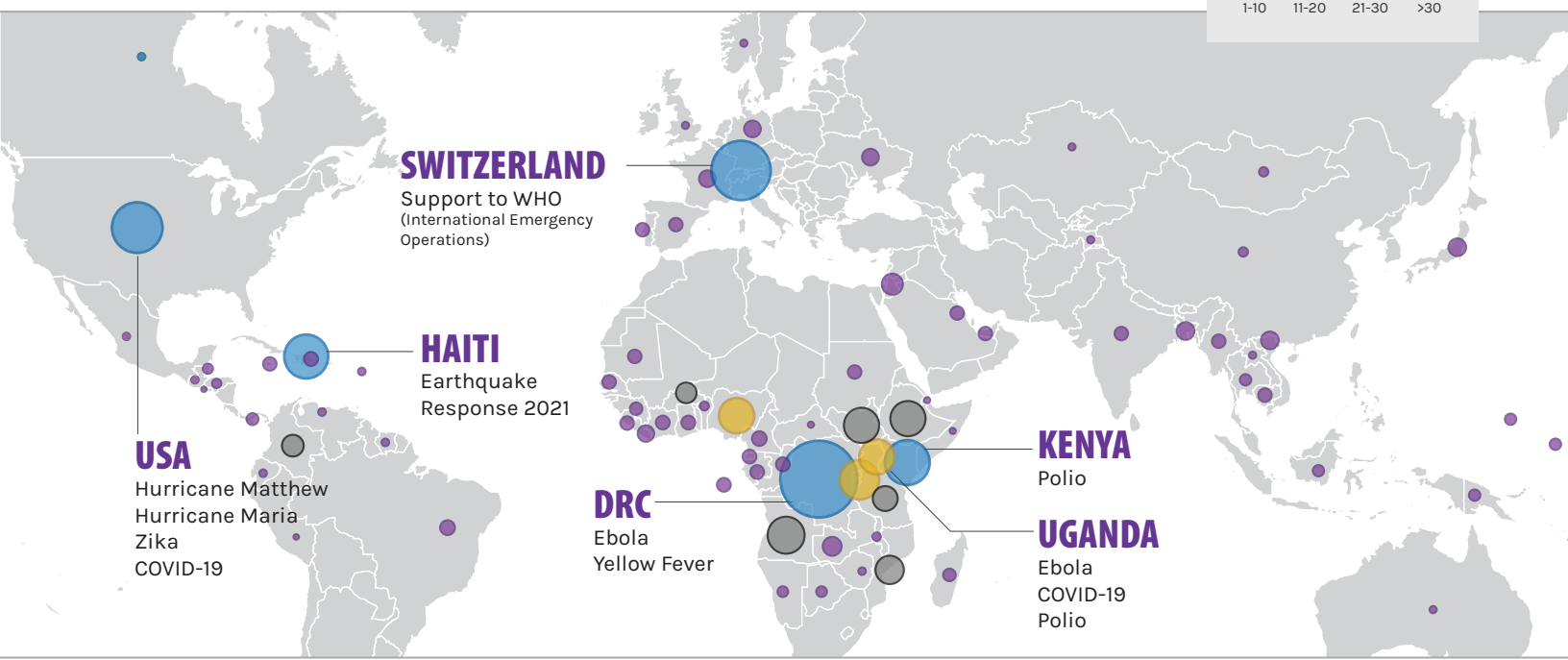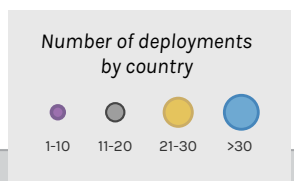
It also coordinates and supports many of CDC's international outbreak response operations and provides training to partner countries on the establishment and use of event-based surveillance systems. GDDOC serves as CDC's representative on the Steering Committee for the WHO's Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN).

GOARN is a network of technical institutions and organizations that rapidly deploys experts to countries affected by public health crises.

Since 2015, GRRT has supported public health emergency responses in more than 54 countries and territories including the Ebola outbreaks in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Zika response in the Caribbean, and the domestic response to the COVID-19 pandemic. GRRT proves that a capable, sustainable emergency workforce is an essential part of maintaining global health security.

GLOBAL RAPID RESPONSE TEAM DEPLOYMENTS
OCTOBER 2015-DECEMBER-2021

Number of deployments by country

1-10   11-20   21-30   >30

SWITZERLAND
Support to WHO
(International Emergency
Operations)

HAITI
Earthquake
Response 2021

USA
Hurricane Matthew
Hurricane Maria
Zika
COVID-19

DRC
Ebola
Yellow Fever

KENYA
Polio

UGANDA
Ebola
COVID-19
Polio

CLOSING THE GAP: MOVING FORWARD

Through the integration of disease detection and response, GEARS is an agency-wide asset that supports CDC's Emergency Operations Center and enhances CDC's ability to quickly detect, monitor and respond to health threats worldwide during an emergency. The technical expertise needed in each emergency, including surveillance, language, and response skills varies. GEARS will continue to evolve to provide the right people with the right skills at the right time to stop outbreaks at the source.

DIVISION OF GLOBAL HEALTH PROTECTION

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