

Health systems resilience during COVID-19

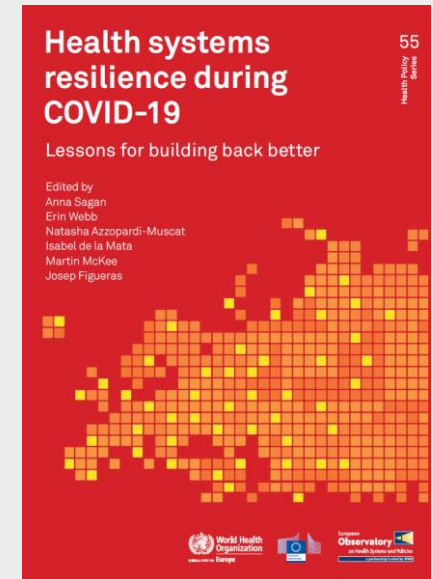
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On behalf of the author and editor team

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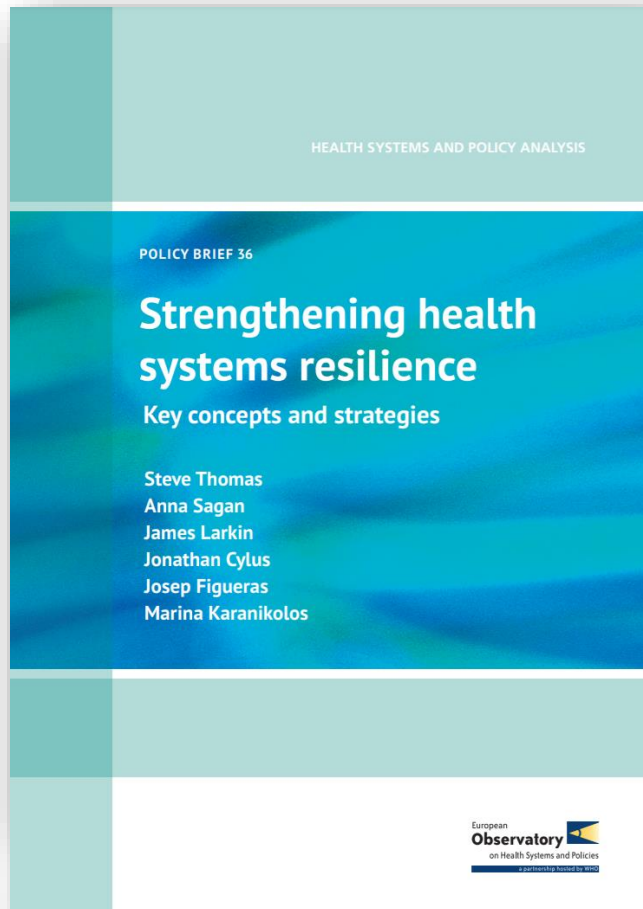
20 key strategies for a resilient response to COVID-19

LEADING AND GOVERNING THE COVID-19 RESPONSE	
Strategy 1	Steering the response through effective political leadership
Strategy 2	Delivering a clear and timely COVID-19 response strategy
Strategy 3	Strengthening monitoring, surveillance and early warning systems
Strategy 4	Transferring the best available evidence from research to policy
Strategy 5	Coordinating effectively within (horizontally) and across (vertically) levels of government
Strategy 6	Ensuring transparency, legitimacy and accountability
Strategy 7	Communicating clearly and transparently with the population and stakeholders
Strategy 8	Involving nongovernmental stakeholders including the health workforce, civil society and communities
Strategy 9	Coordinating the COVID-19 response beyond national borders
FINANCING COVID-19 SERVICES	
Strategy 10	Ensuring sufficient and stable funds to meet needs
Strategy 11	Adapting purchasing, procurement and payment systems to meet changing needs and balance economic incentives
Strategy 12	Supporting universal health coverage and reducing barriers to services
MOBILIZING AND SUPPORTING THE HEALTH WORKFORCE	
Strategy 13	Ensuring an adequate health workforce by scaling-up existing capacity and recruiting additional health workers
Strategy 14	Implementing flexible and effective approaches to using the workforce
Strategy 15	Ensuring physical, mental health and financial support for health workers
STRENGTHENING PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS	
Strategy 16	Implementing appropriate nonpharmaceutical interventions and Find, Test, Trace, Isolate and Support (FTTIS) services to control or mitigate transmission
Strategy 17	Implementing effective COVID-19 vaccination programmes
Strategy 18	Maintaining routine public health services
TRANSFORMING DELIVERY OF HEALTH SERVICES TO ADDRESS COVID-19 AND OTHER NEEDS	
Strategy 19	Scaling-up, repurposing and (re)distributing existing capacity to cope with sudden surges in COVID-19 demand
Strategy 20	Adapting or transforming service delivery by implementing alternative and flexible patient care pathways and interventions and recognizing the key role of primary health care

<https://eurohealthobservatory.who.int/>

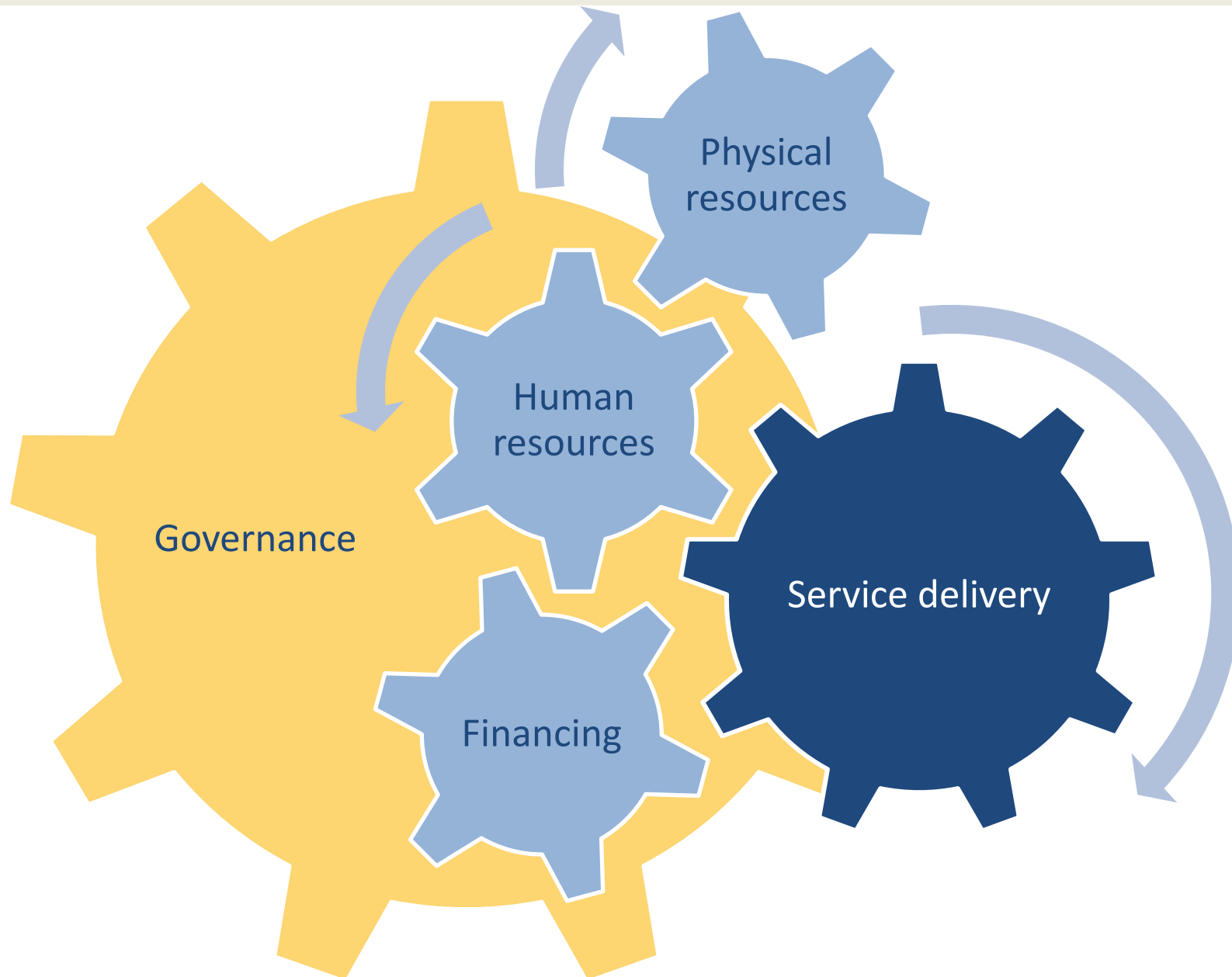


How did we derive these strategies?





Grouping of strategies



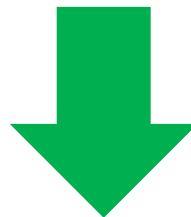


Public health protected specialist care from being overwhelmed

LEADING AND GOVERNING THE COVID-19 RESPONSE	
Strategy 1	Supporting the response through effective public health leadership
Strategy 2	Developing clear and timely COVID-19 response strategy
Strategy 3	Strengthening monitoring, surveillance and early warning systems
Strategy 4	Ensuring the health system is robust to demand for services
Strategy 5	Coordinating effectively across professional and across territorial levels of government
Strategy 6	Ensuring transparency, legitimacy and accountability
Strategy 7	Communicating clearly and transparently with the population and stakeholders
Strategy 8	Ensuring implementation and evaluation leading to health system and service improvements
Strategy 9	Coordinating the COVID-19 response across different sectors
FINANCING COVID-19 RESPONSE	
Strategy 10	Ensuring sufficient and stable funds to meet needs
Strategy 11	Addressing purchasing, procurement and payment systems to meet changing needs and finance economic responses
Strategy 12	Supporting universal health coverage and equity through services
BUILDING AND SUPPORTING THE HEALTH WORKFORCE	
Strategy 13	Ensuring an adequate health workforce to sustain existing capacity and recruiting additional health workers
Strategy 14	Supporting health and welfare of health workers during the outbreak
Strategy 15	Supporting professional development and training
IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS	
Strategy 16	Implementing evidence-based non-pharmaceutical interventions and social, behavioural and support (FTTIS) services to control or mitigate transmission
Strategy 17	Implementing effective COVID-19 vaccination programmes
Strategy 18	Monitoring vaccine uptake, health services
MAINTAINING ESSENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES AND SUPPORTING COVID-19 AND OTHER NEEDS	
Strategy 19	Supporting, responding and coordinating existing capacity to cope with sudden surges in COVID-19 demand
Strategy 20	Maintaining or transferring service delivery to responding alternative and flexible patient care pathways and interventions and mitigating the key



Reducing transmission



- Non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs)
- Find, Test, Trace, Isolate, Support (FTTIS)
- COVID-19 Vaccination

Adapting or transforming service delivery

Implementing alternative and flexible patient care pathways

Recognizing the key role of PHC

Creating guidelines for treatment and prioritization

Scaling up the use of digital health

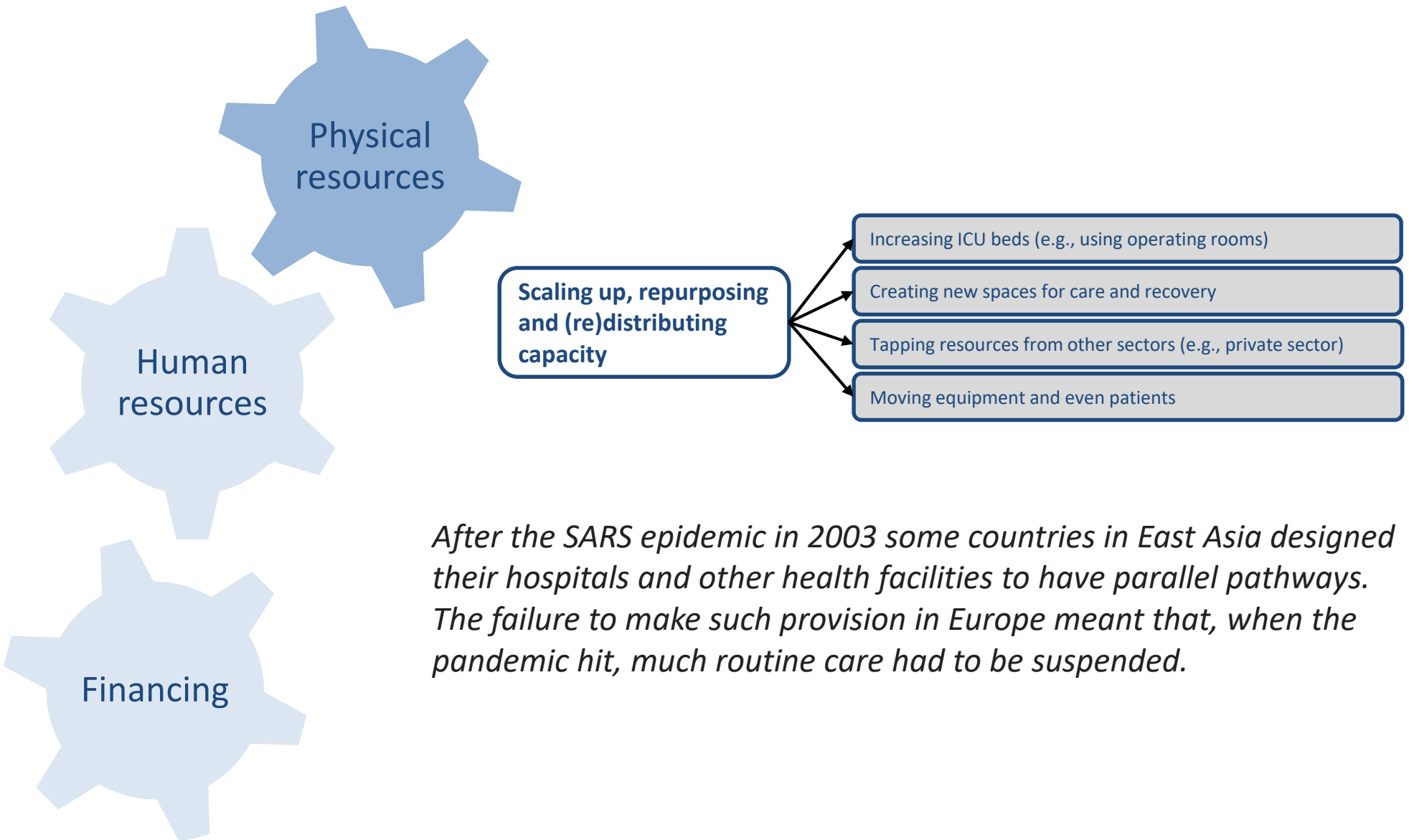
Maintaining preventive services

- Routine vaccination
- Screening
- Check-ups



Physical resources had to be scaled up, repurposed and (re)distributed

LEADING AND GOVERNING THE COVID-19 RESPONSE	
Strategy 1	Supporting the national health system to deliver a coordinated response
Strategy 2	Developing a clear and timely COVID-19 response strategy
Strategy 3	Strengthening monitoring, surveillance and early warning systems
Strategy 4	Ensuring the health system is resilient to the impact of COVID-19
Strategy 5	Coordinating effectively across international and across territorial levels of government
Strategy 6	Ensuring transparency, legitimacy and accountability
Strategy 7	Communicating clearly and transparently with the population and stakeholders
Strategy 8	Ensuring implementation and evaluation leading to health systems and quality and innovation
Strategy 9	Coordinating the COVID-19 response across different sectors
FINANCING COVID-19 RESPONSE	
Strategy 10	Ensuring sufficient and stable funds to meet needs
Strategy 11	Addressing financing, procurement and payment systems to meet changing needs and finance economic responses
Strategy 12	Supporting national health coverage and equity to ensure access to services
BUILDING AND SUPPORTING THE HEALTH WORKFORCE	
Strategy 13	Ensuring an adequate health workforce to sustain up existing capacity and recruiting additional health workers
Strategy 14	Improving health and welfare opportunities for the workforce
Strategy 15	Ensuring physical, mental health and financial support for health workers
STRENGTHENING PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS	
Strategy 16	Supporting national implementation of non-pharmaceutical and social, behavioural and support (PPE) measures to control or mitigate transmission
Strategy 17	Implementing effective COVID-19 vaccination programmes
Strategy 18	Monitoring and evaluating public health services
Strategy 19	Supporting and coordinating existing capacity to cope with sudden surges in COVID-19 demand
Role of primary health care	

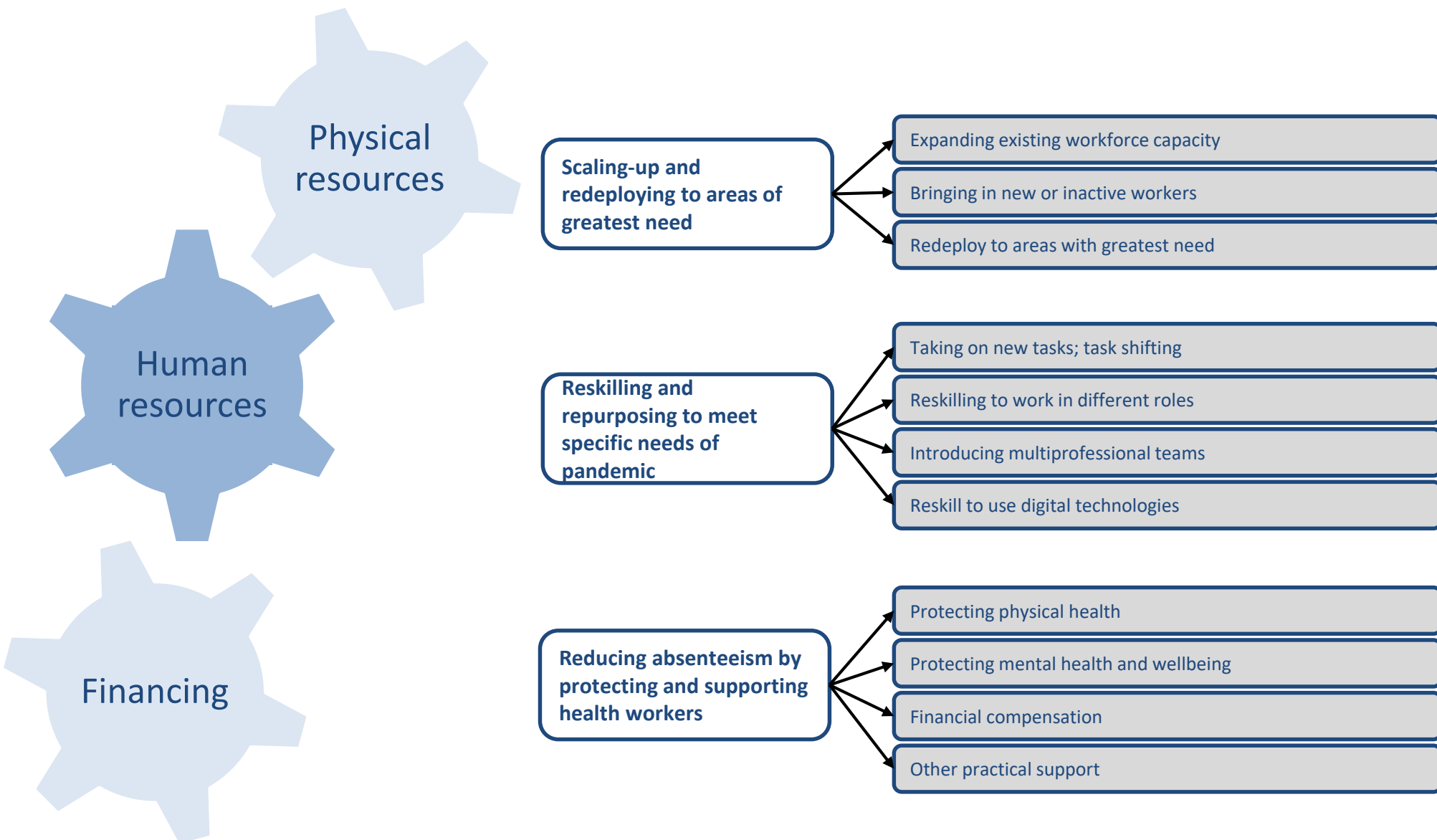


After the SARS epidemic in 2003 some countries in East Asia designed their hospitals and other health facilities to have parallel pathways. The failure to make such provision in Europe meant that, when the pandemic hit, much routine care had to be suspended.



Human resources had to be increased in numbers, reskilled and supported

LEADING AND GOVERNING THE COVID-19 RESPONSE	
Strategy 1	Supporting the response through effective public health systems
Strategy 2	Strengthening case and data COVID-19 response strategy
Strategy 3	Strengthening monitoring, surveillance and early warning systems
Strategy 4	Strengthening the health system's ability to respond to COVID-19
Strategy 5	Coordinating effectively across professional and across territorial levels of government
Strategy 6	Ensuring transparency, legitimacy and accountability
Strategy 7	Communicating clearly and transparently with the population and stakeholders
Strategy 8	Ensuring implementation and evaluation evidence for health workers and quality and standards
Strategy 9	Coordinating the COVID-19 response beyond national borders
FINANCING COVID-19 RESPONSE	
Strategy 10	Ensuring sufficient and stable funds to meet needs
Strategy 11	Enabling purchasing, procurement and payment systems to meet changing needs and maintain economic resilience
SUPPORTING AND SUPPORTING THE HEALTH WORKFORCE	
Strategy 12	Ensuring an adequate health workforce to deliver up existing capacity and recruiting additional health workers
Strategy 13	Reskilling health workers and other capacities to deliver the response
STRENGTHENING PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS	
Strategy 14	Supporting evidence-based implementation of non-pharmaceutical and social, behavioural and support (PPE) services to control or mitigate transmission
Strategy 15	Implementing effective COVID-19 vaccination programmes
Strategy 16	Monitoring vaccine uptake, health services
STRENGTHENING THE HEALTH SYSTEM'S CAPACITY TO RESPOND TO COVID-19 AND OTHER NEEDS	
Strategy 17	Strengthening surveillance and monitoring evidence to respond to other public health needs in COVID-19 response
Strategy 18	Enabling or reinforcing service delivery by supporting alternative and flexible patient care pathways and interventions and recognising the key role of primary health care





Financing had to be increased and adjusted

LEADING AND GOVERNING THE COVID-19 RESPONSE	
Strategy 1	Ensuring the response through effective national leadership
Strategy 2	Developing clear and timely COVID-19 response strategy
Strategy 3	Strengthening monitoring, surveillance and early warning systems
Strategy 4	Investing in data capacity, evidence, knowledge, research, innovation
Strategy 5	Coordinating effectively across ministries and across territorial levels of government
Strategy 6	Ensuring transparency, legitimacy and accountability
Strategy 7	Communicating clearly and transparently with the population and stakeholders
Strategy 8	Ensuring long-term resilience and capacity for health systems and health workforce
ENSURING COVID-19 SERVICES	
Strategy 9	Ensuring sufficient and stable funds to meet needs
Strategy 10	Adapting purchasing, procurement and payment systems to meet changing needs and balance incentives
Strategy 11	Supporting universal health coverage and reducing barriers to service
SUPPORTING PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS	
Strategy 12	Employing effective and innovative approaches to procurement
Strategy 13	Incentivising provision of needed services and innovations in service delivery
Strategy 14	Compensating providers for income losses and extra expenses
Strategy 15	Updating coverage to include COVID-19 services
Strategy 16	Ensuring coverage for vulnerable populations
Strategy 17	Addressing financial barriers to using health services
SUPPORTING UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE AND REDUCING BARRIERS TO SERVICES	
Strategy 18	Ensuring sufficient and stable funds to meet needs
Strategy 19	Adapting purchasing, procurement and payment systems to meet changing needs and balance incentives
Strategy 20	Supporting universal health coverage and reducing barriers to service

Physical
resources

Human
resources

Financing

Ensure sufficient and
stable funds to meet
needs

Drawing on financial reserves

Reallocating general government funds to the health system

Borrowing, seeking financial assistance from international
lenders

Adapting purchasing,
procurement and payment
systems to meet changing
needs and balance incentives

Employing centralized and more flexible approaches to
procurement

Incentivising provision of needed services and innovations in
service delivery

Compensating providers for income losses and extra expenses

Support universal health
coverage and reduce
barriers to services

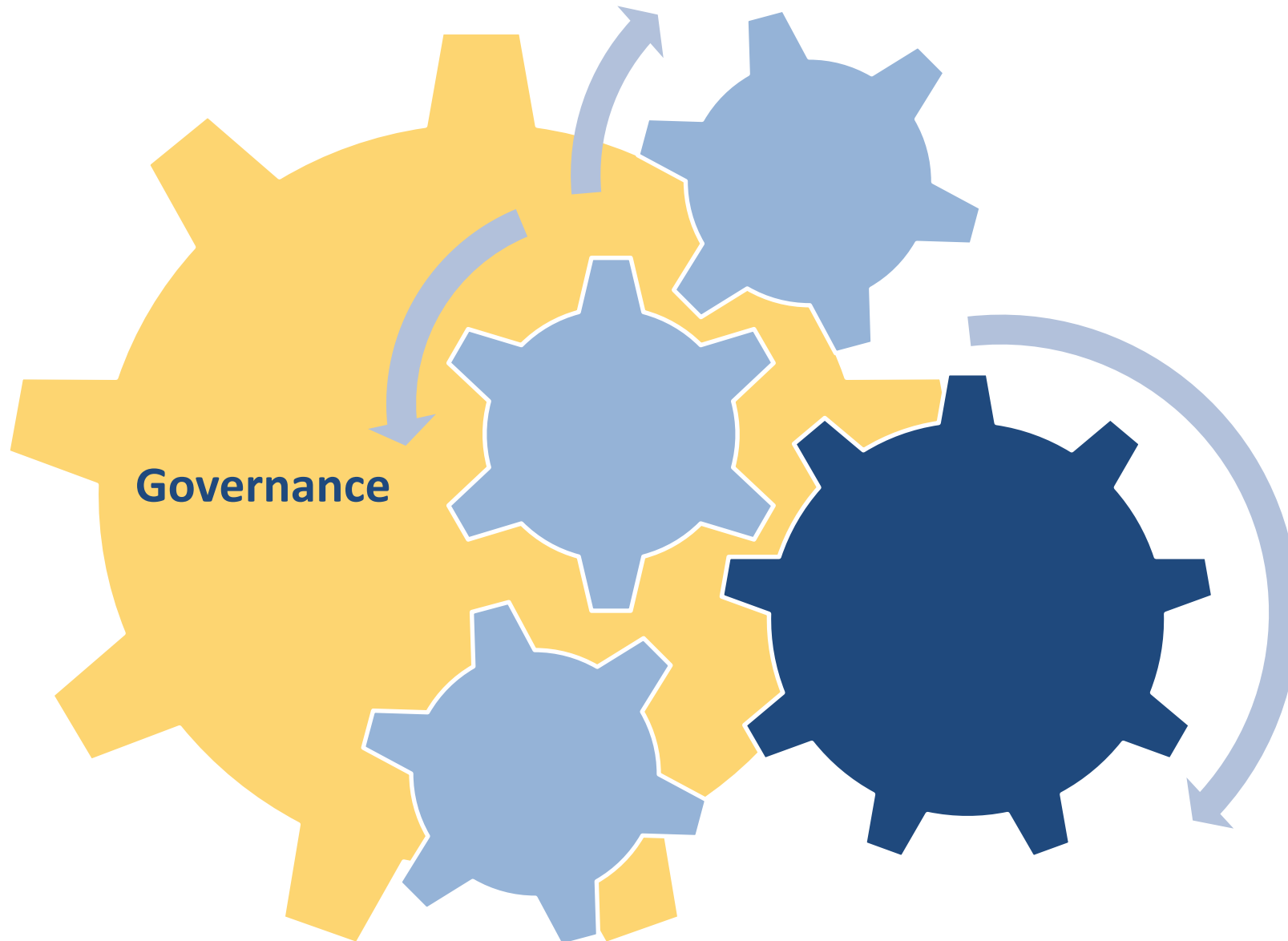
Updating coverage to include COVID-19 services

Ensuring coverage for vulnerable populations

Addressing financial barriers to using health services



Leadership and governance were essential to an effective response...





...but are the most complex to unpack

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Strategy 6	Ensuring transparency, legitimacy and accountability
Strategy 7	Communicating clearly and transparently with the population and stakeholders
Strategy 8	Involving non-governmental stakeholders including the health workforce, civil society and communities
Strategy 9	Coordinating the COVID-19 response beyond national borders
Strategy 10	Ensuring sufficient and robust health care services
Strategy 11	Addressing purchasing, procurement and payment systems to meet changing needs and balance economic responses
Strategy 12	Addressing personal health coverage and financing barriers to services
Strategy 13	Supporting universal health coverage and financing barriers to services
Strategy 14	Ensuring an adequate health workforce to sustain up scaling capacity and recruiting additional health workers
Strategy 15	Improving physical and clinical capacities to deliver care
Strategy 16	Ensuring physical, mental health and financial support for health workers
TRANSVERSAL PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS	
Strategy 17	Implementing evidence-based interventions for the control and elimination of communicable diseases
Strategy 18	Implementing evidence-based interventions for the control and elimination of non-communicable diseases
Strategy 19	Implementing evidence-based interventions for the control and elimination of injuries and violence
Strategy 20	Implementing evidence-based interventions for the control and elimination of zoonotic diseases
Strategy 21	Implementing evidence-based interventions for the control and elimination of antimicrobial resistance
Strategy 22	Implementing evidence-based interventions for the control and elimination of tobacco, alcohol and drug use
Strategy 23	Implementing evidence-based interventions for the control and elimination of obesity and malnutrition
Strategy 24	Implementing evidence-based interventions for the control and elimination of mental health and substance use
Strategy 25	Implementing evidence-based interventions for the control and elimination of ageing and disability
Strategy 26	Implementing evidence-based interventions for the control and elimination of environmental health risks
Strategy 27	Implementing evidence-based interventions for the control and elimination of climate change
Strategy 28	Implementing evidence-based interventions for the control and elimination of digital health
Strategy 29	Implementing evidence-based interventions for the control and elimination of health equity
Strategy 30	Implementing evidence-based interventions for the control and elimination of health systems

1. Steering the response through effective **political leadership**

2. Delivering a clear and timely COVID-19 **response strategy**

3. Strengthening monitoring, surveillance, and **early warning systems**

4. Transferring the best available **evidence from research and policy**

5. **Coordinating effectively** within (horizontally) and across (vertically) levels of government

6. Ensuring **transparency, legitimacy and accountability**

7. **Communicating** clearly and transparently with the population and relevant stakeholders

8. Involving non-governmental **stakeholders** including the health workforce, civil society, and communities

9. **Coordinating** the COVID-19 response beyond the national borders



What next?

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Possible assessment areas:

- Availability of non-COVID services (diagnostics, primary and specialist care, emergency care, mental health services, rehabilitation, etc); change in health services utilisation, waiting times, bed occupancy, unmet need, etc.
- Availability of essential medicines
- Maintaining quality standards across all services
- Ability to provide of health services remotely
- Ensuring provision of services for at-risk population groups
- Monitoring of access to services (e.g. utilisation, waiting times, unmet need; equity of access)



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