

Health Emergency Preparedness Project Approved to Strengthen Botswana's Resilience

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The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors has approved the Botswana Health Emergency Preparedness, Response and Resilience (HEPRR) Project, aimed at strengthening the country's capacity to respond to future pandemics, climate-related health risks, and everyday public health challenges.

The project comes at a critical time for Botswana, as the country faces overlapping shocks from severe droughts, floods, and systemic vulnerabilities exposed during the COVID-19 pandemic. These pressures were further highlighted by the State of Public Health Emergency declared in August 2025 due to nationwide medicine shortages.

"On behalf of the people of Botswana, we welcome this timely partnership with the World Bank," said Dr. Stephen Modise, Botswana's Minister of Health. "This project responds directly to our urgent national priorities. It is not just a financial investment, but a strategic commitment to building a resilient, data-driven health system that leaves no Motswana behind."

The HEPRR Project will provide \$43 million in financing, comprising a \$40 million loan and a \$3 million grant. It will focus on improving efficiency, equity, and resilience across the health system. A core component is Botswana's digital health transformation, including the rollout of an electronic Logistics Management Information System (eLMIS) to track medical supplies in real time, from central warehouses to remote health facilities. This will help prevent shortages and ensure continuous access to essential medicines.

The project will also establish a new climate-resilient National Drug Quality Control Laboratory to

safeguard medicine quality and safety, strengthening public confidence and treatment outcomes.

"This project goes beyond crisis response," said Satu Kahkonen, World Bank Country Director for Botswana. "It is about building a health system that delivers quality care every day and can withstand future emergencies, supporting long-term resilience and sustainable growth."

In addition, the project will strengthen disease surveillance and outbreak response. Investments in the National Public Health Laboratory will enable faster detection of infectious diseases, while national and district Rapid Response Teams will be trained to act quickly in the face of emerging health threats. The project will also promote gender equality by supporting greater participation of women in emergency response leadership roles.

The HEPRR Project will be implemented over five years by the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the Botswana Medicines Regulatory Authority.