

STRENGTHENING GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH INTELLIGENCE

The Public Health Intelligence Competency Framework and Curriculum

What is public health intelligence?

Public health intelligence (PHI) is a core public health function responsible for identifying, collecting, synthesizing, analysing and disseminating health-related information to enable timely and effective public health actions.¹ PHI depends on robust systems, timely data and skilled professionals to detect and respond to potential threats.

What is the importance of PHI?

PHI is important for strengthening global health security through:

Rapid detection of public health threats

Provision of evidence that supports timely public health action

Improved preparedness to strengthen health systems

Supporting the One Health approach

Why do we need the PHI Competency Framework and Curriculum?

Recent public health emergencies have exposed gaps in PHI capacities between countries. To address these gaps, the World Health Organization (WHO) and its partners have developed the PHI Competency Framework and Curriculum, with the aim to:



Enhance public health security, surveillance and emergency responses;



Build a well-trained PHI workforce ready to tackle public health threats;



Provide a structured, adaptable, globally applicable approach to PHI training;



Serve as a reference for PHI curricula, learning activities, workforce planning and policy development.

What are the key features of the PHI Competency Framework and Curriculum?



Broadly applicable: target audiences include people working in higher education, field epidemiology training and applied public health settings, policy-makers, licensing agencies, nongovernmental organizations and private-sector organizations.



Accessible: relevant for PHI workforce members at all levels, including PHI officers, epidemiologists, environmental health officers and food safety professionals.



Comprehensive coverage: address PHI activities across human, animal and environmental health sectors using an all-hazards and One Health approach.



Training and education: support structured learning for new and existing PHI professionals.



Workforce planning: identify skills gaps and enhance PHI capacity.



Career development: help people in the PHI workforce to assess and enhance their PHI competencies.



Dynamic and flexible: evolve with advancements in data collection, analytics and health intelligence techniques.

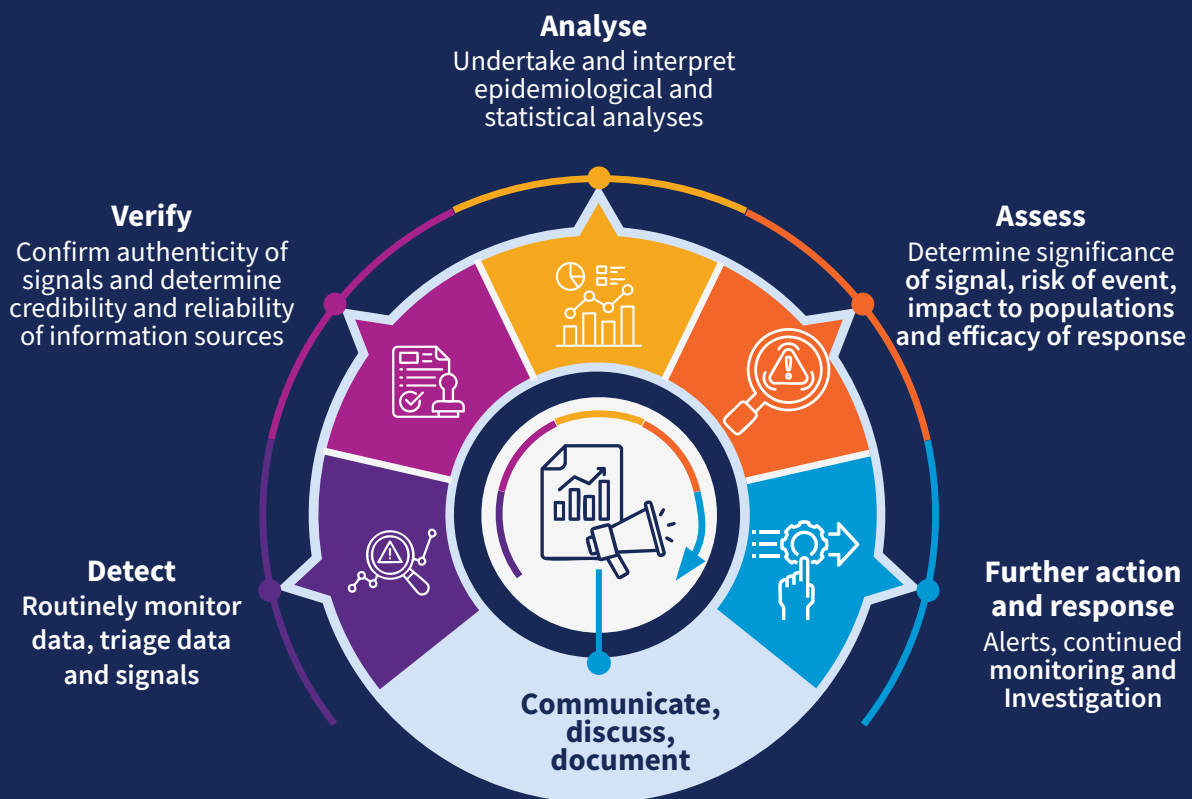


Modular and adaptable: suitable for well-established PHI programmes and resource-limited settings.

¹ UNTERM: the United Nations Terminology Database. New York: United Nations; 2022 (<https://unterm.un.org/unterm2/en/view/2b406931-845d-4e66-a6fe-b464ee3d6573> , accessed 21 April 2025).



A simplified representation of the public health intelligence (PHI) process



Source: Adapted from the WHO Epidemic Intelligence from Open Sources (EIOS) initiative

The PHI Competency Framework defines essential PHI workforce competencies and tasks.
The PHI Competency translates these into structured learning objectives.

The Framework and Curriculum comprise:

Four technical domains aligned with the PHI
detect, verify, analyse, assess;

One functional domain covering fundamental competencies beyond technical skills – collaborative information exchange.

Learn more about the PHI Competency Framework and Curriculum
Visit our website or contact



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