



## **From a Vaccine Mascot to Business Leadership, Lessons for the US From Brazil's Public Health System in Building Public Trust and Keeping It**

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Public health institutions are under threat by populist governments **across the globe**.

From **Budapest** to **Jakarta, Indonesia**, public health agencies are being stripped of funding and independence. Meanwhile, disinformation has sown distrust in scientific experts. The results are already visible through the return of diseases once thought **eliminated or controlled, like measles** and **whooping cough**.

The United States is no exception to this trend. Since Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. was confirmed as secretary of Health and Human Services in February 2025, he has **fired over 10,000 staff**, cut budgets and **attempted to gut childhood vaccine recommendations**. Though medical and public health groups have **pushed back with some success**, key government health institutions **face a leadership vacuum**, and national public health policy has fractured into "**health alliances**" formed by groups of states.