

READY: Outbreak Preparedness Planning (OPP)

September 18, 2019

BACKGROUND

Recent major disease outbreaks have revealed critical gaps in the global humanitarian community's response capacities and approaches, and the challenges of coordinating different actors for a timely and effective response. Weak operational platforms have been significant barriers to rapid scale-up of NGOs and the integration of responses across sectors. Some progress in improved coordination and operational capacity has been evidenced in more recent responses, but many challenges remain.

READY's mandate is to identify these remaining gaps through global and regional consultations and landscaping, and to leverage the initiative's relatively limited resources and timeframe, to augment efforts for addressing those gaps. With the understanding that a plethora of initiatives and programs exist aimed at improving disease outbreak prevention, detection and response, READY's specific focus is on humanitarian response capacities with an aim to not duplicate. READY will complement these broader efforts and identify strategic contributions that the operational, academic, and technical consortium members can make for the broader humanitarian community's improved response to major disease outbreaks.

During READY's global and regional consultations¹, and global landscape analysis², where a wide cross-section of major global and regional actors were interviewed about the humanitarian community's strengths and gaps in outbreak response, several themes arose. For the most part, these themes reinforced many known issues that were incorporated into READY's initial design, but the details and nuances raised by outbreak response actors have been critical in helping refine READY's contributions to major disease outbreak response. Key themes relevant to outbreak preparedness include:

- Many organizations are engaged in outbreak response, but their involvement in the response is ad hoc and negotiated during the response. Most did not have a clearly defined approach or strong sense of what their unique value-add would be prior to the response, especially when working in non-public health sectors. Identifying strengths, gaps and potential approaches across actors and across sectors would be an important component of holistic outbreak preparedness planning.
- The global outbreak response architecture, and how it translates in a country-level response where host government response capacity is overwhelmed, is opaque and most organizations are unclear on how they can most efficiently engage. This point was particularly acute within NGOs. Any preparedness exercise should include discussion of how response architecture is structured, how it has played-out in the past, and exercises on how it might play-out in specific regions and countries – enabling organizations to think through their potential approach and relevant strengths and gaps.
- Most organizations feel that the process for developing an emergency preparedness plan (reviewing capacities and systems, asking critical questions, etc.) is more useful than the EPP document itself. Outbreak preparedness planning should give organizations planning tools and resources to integrate into their own processes and not rely on the creation of a stand-alone preparedness plan.

Specific to READY's Objective 2 for improved operational capacity, but also as a key contribution to Objective 1 for improved coordination, READY will convene outbreak preparedness planning (OPP) exercises in four regions, seven countries, and one at the global level. The OPP process will engage operational organizations who are either actively engaged in outbreak response, or have intentions to engage in future responses. READY's operational review, currently being conducted, will curate and document consortium-

 READY
1 Consultations Repo

 READY Landscape
2 Analysis.pdf

specific and global recommendations for operational readiness. Based on this review, READY will provide practical recommendations to improve preparedness and response, and integrate them into operational guidance, exercises, and tools that organizations can adapt and integrate into their broader preparedness systems. The OPP process will be one part of a cohesive suite of activities conducted by READY, including: webinars, e-learning and a community of practice for pre- and post-workshop engagement; the curation, development, and dissemination of operational and technical resources; and multi-sectoral integrated trainings and simulations.

READY'S OPP APPROACH

A three-stage (global, regional, national) approach that brings together multiple organizations engaged in outbreak response to have facilitated discussions about readiness for response and to incorporate findings, recommendations and tools into their own emergency preparedness systems. Below, please find intended audience, location, dates, objectives, and content for each stage:

STAGE 1 (GLOBAL): An HQ-level workshop bringing together global leaders in health emergencies, humanitarian operations, and multi-sectoral representatives for facilitated discussions and exercises on global operational readiness for major disease outbreak response. This stage will also include TOT components for regional facilitators, will establish critical commitments from key stakeholders at the global level for effective buy-in at regional and national levels, and will gather feedback on the OPP approach for revision and adaption in stages two and three.

AUDIENCE	Participants: 25 representatives from NGOs and stakeholders with an interest in building readiness for response to major disease outbreaks Facilitators: 3-5 from READY core team and consortium members
LOCATION	London
DATES	December 2019

STAGE 2 (REGIONAL): Four workshops in regional hubs, bringing together NGO regional humanitarian leaders in health emergencies, humanitarian operations, and multi-sectoral representatives for facilitated discussions and exercises on regional operational readiness of NGOs for major disease outbreak response.

AUDIENCE	Participants: 25 representatives from NGOs and stakeholders with an interest in building readiness for response to major disease outbreaks Facilitators: 3-5 from READY core team, consortium members, and Save the Children regional offices
LOCATIONS	Dakar, Nairobi, Amman, Bangkok (TBC)
DATES	January 2020 – March 2020

STAGE 3 (NATIONAL): Seven workshops in READY's focus countries, bringing together NGO leaders in humanitarian response, health emergencies, multi-sector representatives, relevant national ministries, etc. for facilitated discussions and exercises on NGO operational readiness for major disease outbreak response.

AUDIENCE	Participants: 25 representatives from NGOs and stakeholders (e.g. MOH, UN, clusters) with an interest in building readiness for response to major disease outbreaks Facilitators: 3-5 from READY core team, consortium members, Save the Children regional and country offices
LOCATIONS	DRC, Nigeria (TBC), South Sudan, Uganda, Vietnam, Indonesia, Bangladesh
DATES	April 2020 – September 2020

INTER-AGENCY OUTBREAK PREPAREDNESS PLANNING: OBJECTIVES AND CONTENT

A series of 3-day preparedness workshops at each stage (described above) bringing together NGO leaders in health emergencies, humanitarian operations, and multi-sectoral representatives for facilitated discussions and exercises about readiness for major disease outbreak response, and to incorporate findings, recommendations and tools into their own emergency preparedness systems.

GOAL	Humanitarian INGOs adopt an outbreak preparedness planning process and strengthen institutional operational competencies and structures to support a more holistic, integrated humanitarian response to major outbreaks, while WHO/UN systems and implementing actors foster strengthened interoperability
OBJECTIVES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased awareness and understanding among participants of humanitarian response mechanisms and structures for major disease outbreaks, and how various organizations can complement a major outbreak response 2. Examination of contextual capacities and gaps across organizations based on the READY operational capacity assessment and exploration of how these inform organizational strategic planning for future outbreak response operations 3. Increased understanding of how to apply best-practices for outbreak response readiness (based on consultations, landscape and operational/technical review) to organizational readiness planning 4. Identification and agreement on systemic issues to inform a collective advocacy agenda that can be adopted by other organizations and implemented via similar initiatives and processes in each region and country
CONTENT	<p><i>Pre-work</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key questions for consideration at organizational level, including initial self-assessment of current preparedness plans - Guidance for organizational discussions about potential outbreak response approaches – what does or could your agency bring to a response? <p><i>Workshop (3 days)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction to 1-2 disease-specific scenarios – how large outbreaks affect systems, services, communities, etc. across sectors - Introduction to global humanitarian response mechanisms and structures - For regions and countries: overview of regional or national (government) outbreak response plans, strategies, etc. – potential for mini-simulation or scenario-based activity on how the plans might roll-out at the regional or country-level in a response (WHO, EOCs, IMS, clusters) - Considerations for an integrated approach and introduction to the integrated framework - Key operational readiness considerations based on READY’s global operational assessment and recommendations, expectations of NGOs, needed capacities: sessions on systems like HR, logs, security, and key capacities like SBC, OneHealth, etc. - Mapping exercise to discuss potential complementarity and gaps in NGO geographic locations, functions, capacities, and skills, and particularly in READY sectors, cross-cutting areas, and OneHealth - Activities to guide participants to think of considerations/recommendations and how they apply to their own organizations, based on their own assessments and prioritization of gaps - Adaptable take-away tools and guidelines, including templates, checklists, etc. for next steps on more detailed planning within respective organizations (similar to part II below) <p><i>Follow-up Support by READY</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engagement in webinars, e-learning, and community of practice - Sharing of technical and operational guidelines as they are curated or developed by leading technical experts and global groups - Participation in integrated multi-sectoral outbreak response technical trainings (late 2020-early 2021)

AGENCY-SPECIFIC OUTBREAK PREPAREDNESS PLANNING

Following the inter-agency planning process described above, participating organizations will be given self-assessment tools and encouraged to incorporate recommendations and planning within their own organizations. As READY's lead operational agency, Save the Children will set an example by directly applying the OPP process to create plans in relevant regions and countries by conducting a series of 2-day EPP-style workshops at each level described above. Save the Children will follow the below approach and READY will provide other organizations with tools, such as content, facilitator guide, and discussion suggestions.

OBJECTIVES	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Examination of contextual capacities and gaps within Save the Children's relevant regional or country platform based on findings and recommendations from the READY operational capacity assessment2. Incorporation of best-practices for outbreak response readiness (based on consultations, landscape and operational/technical review) into Save the Children's outbreak readiness plan3. Development of preparedness plan considering specific capacities, gaps, and potential approaches for major disease outbreak response, as an annex to the broader EPP, and incorporated into the EPP process for periodic review and maintenance
CONTENT	<p><i>Pre-work</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Key questions for consideration at organizational level, including initial self-assessment of current preparedness plans- Organizational discussions about potential outbreak response approaches – what does or could Save the Children bring to a response?- Participation in part 1 of READY's inter-agency outbreak preparedness planning <p><i>Workshop (2 days)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Highlights and key points from Part 1's introductory sessions, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Disease-specific scenarios – how large outbreaks affect systems, services, communities, etc.▪ Humanitarian response mechanisms and structures▪ Overview of regional or national outbreak response plans, strategies, etc.▪ Considerations for an integrated approach and introduction to the integrated framework- Facilitated exercise to discuss potential strengths, gaps, added-value of the Save the Children, and potential complementarity and gaps in relation to other actors- Presentation and contextualization of capacity assessment findings and activities to guide participants to think through/validate considerations/recommendations- Facilitated exercises to explore key operational readiness considerations and plan for major disease outbreak response scenarios, including needed capacities and Save the Children's specific strengths, gaps, areas for improvement- Draft initial plan <p><i>Follow-up Support by READY</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Engagement in webinars, e-learning, and community of practice- Sharing of technical and operational guidelines as they are curated or developed- Integrated multi-sectoral technical trainings (late 2020-early 2021)- Review and adaptation of subsequent plan iterations
AUDIENCE	<p><i>Participants:</i> 8-12 operational and program representatives from Save the Children's regional and country offices</p> <p><i>Facilitators:</i> 1-2 from READY core team/consortium members and 2-3 from Save the Children HQ and/or regional offices</p>