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Catherine McGowan/Save the Children

READY:
GLOBAL READINESS FOR MAJOR DISEASE OUTBREAK RESPONSE

July 2020: Health care staff attend a training in a COVID-19 isolation and treatment center in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

Large-scale infectious disease emergencies have disastrous impacts on families, societies, systems, and economies. For example, the impact of the 2014-2015 Ebola epidemic in West Africa stretched well beyond the estimated 11,310 deaths and the 28,616 known infections. Many health workers were lost and health systems were unable to cope—severely restricting access to routine and life-saving health services. Millions of children lost months of schooling—many never returned—and thousands of children lost parents, siblings, and family members. Disruptions to markets and livelihoods also had dire consequences for the poorest communities.

Now, the COVID-19 pandemic is revealing similar systemic challenges across health systems, economies, and communities, but at a global scale, and countries around the world have struggled to respond. Ebola, COVID-19, and other major outbreaks in recent years - including influenza, Zika, plague, diphtheria, and yellow fever – demonstrate that governments, donors, and aid agencies are severely challenged in their response and coordination capacity, highlighting gaps in the global humanitarian community's ability to respond to major infectious disease outbreaks, particularly those that escalate to public health emergencies of international concern.

In 2018, the United States Agency for International Development's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance-funded Save the Children to lead a three-year initiative to augment global capacity to respond to major disease outbreaks. Through a consortium of partners, the READY initiative supplements existing efforts to strengthen coordination between global humanitarian outbreak structures and operational organizations responding to outbreaks. READY is building and retaining capacity among operational consortium members, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders in to more quickly and effectively respond to major outbreaks, including COVID-19, with an integrated approach that addresses holistic needs of affected communities—with community engagement and communications at the center.

READY PARTNERS

READY brings together the best parts of what works across the consortium's operational, academic, clinical, and communications organizations to augment global, regional, and country-level capacity in major disease outbreak response coordination, operations, and multi-sectoral integrated programming.
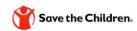
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For more information, contact READY's Chief-of-Party, Laura Cardinal, at lcardinal@savechildren.org

KEY ACTIVITIES:

Augmenting Coordination, Operations, and Technical Capacity for Outbreak Readiness

COORDINATION

- Support and strengthen **outbreak coordination** through leadership and engagement in the Global Health Cluster COVID-19 Task Team, GOARN RCCE for COVID-19 Sub-working Group, GOARN sub-group on community engagement in low resource settings (co-lead), and in additional fora
- Demystify and strengthen the public health and humanitarian architecture through inter-sectoral consultations, guidance notes and through READY trainings and simulations

OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

- Deliver the *Epidemiology and Modeling of Infectious Diseases in the Humanitarian Setting* training package to NGO staff in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia
- Develop a **Social Behahvior Change (SBC) advocacy framework** for public health emergencies
- Develop **operational readiness checklists and trainings** to help NGOs adequately prepare for various infectious disease outbreaks
- Conduct a **mixed-methods analysis of surveillance systems** in humanitarian outbreaks

TECHNICAL READINESS

- Develop and launch an **online outbreak response simulation** for outbreaks in humanitarian settings, highlighting key areas for response readiness across multiple sectors and response domains
- Develop and launch an expanded **integrated framework tool** for respiratory infectious disease outbreaks, that aims to minimize transmission in vulnerable communities by supporting the implementation of non-pharmaceutical interventions with holistic wrap-around humanitarian services
- Develop a **Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) model for outbreaks**, using lessons-learned from COVID-19, designed specifically for humanitarian actors to strengthen their readiness to put communities first during all phases of an outbreak
- Develop and launch several eLearning courses, including for **WASH in Epidemics** and **Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies (IYCF-E) for COVID-19,** and beyond
- Continue to work through global coordination mechanisms to map gaps in **technical tools and guidelines,** provide technical input to new guideline development and existing guideline adaptation, and disseminate technical materials across agencies and sectors

Though global in scope, READY is executing contextualized activities in four regions: **Asia, East Africa, Middle East, and West & Central Africa**

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