



Developing WHO Health Emergencies Strategic (WHE) Approach to CBO and CSO Engagement in Emergency Management

WHO Interregional Consultation of CSO Engagement Focal Points
12 – 13 December 2022
WHO Headquarters, Salle M305, Geneva, Switzerland

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

The Civil Society Organizations (CSO) engagement Initiative was designed, planned and implemented under the leadership of the WHO Country Readiness Strengthening (CRS) Department within the Emergency Preparedness (WPE) Division of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Health Emergencies (WHE) Programme. Guided by the commitment to the 3 Es (Enable, Empower, Engage), the initiative called on partners to create an enabling environment for empowering communities with a strong voice to engage in decision-making and shared accountability for building resilience to emergencies beyond COVID-19.

Gaining on the experiences from implementing the CSO engagement initiative, the CRS/CRR department, in coordination with WHO regional colleagues, will develop a strategic approach to meaningfully engage with grassroots Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and CSOs for strengthening community resilience to emergencies and beyond.

The approach builds upon the lessons learned and the roles played by the CBOs and CSOs during responding to COVID-19 and other emergencies in all regions during the last 2 years.

Interregional Meeting, December 2022:

The meeting will bring together regional CSO engagement focal points to agree on the strategic approach for CSO engagement – the draft will have been consolidated and discussed via bilateral online meetings.

The meeting will also be an opportunity for regions to share their experiences and to agree on areas and strategies of collaboration between the regions.

Key Outcomes:

1. Roles of CBOs and CSOs in emergencies defined.
2. Draft strategic approach is made available on CSO engagement in the context of building resilience to emergencies.
3. Areas for interregional collaboration are identified.

Proposed Agenda:

Day 1: The role of grassroots CBOs and CSOs in emergencies:

- Opening remarks (WPE Directors).
- Presentation on WHO CSO strategy development, by Taina Nakari.
- Showcase experiences within the regions.
- The role of CSOs in emergencies – a review of the contributions received from KSP member CBOs and CSOs.
- Concept idea for future collaboration – PAHO and Nepal (Ingrid-H).
- Conclusions on key lessons learned from the CSO engagement Initiative.

Day 2: Way forward for the strategic approach:

- WHO International collaboration centre overview, by Monir Islam and Manuel Carballo.
- Bilateral regional breakouts for interregional collaboration.
- Discussion on CBO/ CSO engagement in the context of building and strengthening resilience to emergencies. Suggested areas to explore further strengthening collaboration and partnerships with CSOs are:
 - Coordination – identifying synergies between the CBO/CSO roles and national/ local programmes for a harmonized approach to supporting Member States;
 - Policy, norms and standards to support emergency management strategies – opportunities for co-developing in collaboration with CSO partners; and
 - Community-centred inclusive governance for emergency management – coordination and normative efforts geared toward community led impact.
- Agreement on the strategic approach including final comments and input that may have arisen during the meeting.
- Concluding remarks (WPE Directors).

Pre-Reads:

Draft strategic approach to community engagement.