

COVID-19 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DIALOGUE SPACES

Concept Note

Background

As of January 2022, SARS-CoV-2 has infected more than 332 million people, killed over 5.5 million people, and is projected to plunge more millions of people into extreme poverty¹. COVID-19 is associated with an 18% reduction in TB diagnoses between 2019 and 2020, which has reduced access to treatment and led to a 7% increase in TB deaths². The pace of HIV testing declined almost uniformly, leading to fewer people living with HIV initiating treatment in 2020 in 80% of countries³. After steadily declining over 2000-2019, malaria case incidence rose 5% and malaria deaths increased 12% in 2020⁴. An estimated 47,000 (68%) of the additional 69,000 deaths were due to service disruptions from COVID-19. As countries went into lockdown, gender-based violence increased, unemployment soared, and access to health care for the most marginalized was further limited. In some contexts, lockdowns and COVID restrictions were used to justify the further erosion of human and civil rights.

In April 2021 the GF committed a total of 4.1 billion dollars to support COVID19 responses and required that C19RM funding requests be developed through appropriate, multisectoral consultation, and fully inclusive decision-making, which must engage communities and civil society, and ensure coordination with the national COVID-19 response coordinator⁵. The Global Fund's Community, Rights and Gender Strategic Initiative's⁶ (CRG SI's) was leveraged (\$2.1 million) to provide support to strengthen the engagement of civil society and communities in COVID-19 Response Mechanism (C19RM) 2021 funding request development through rapid deployment of technical support. Between April-June 2021 the CRG SI and its partners were able to deliver 38 short-term technical assistance assignments and support community consultations in 64 countries.

In November 2020, the Community, Rights and Gender Department of The Global Fund, in collaboration with the CCM Hub, conducted a survey amongst Civil Society and community Country

¹ <https://covid19.who.int/>

² WHO (2021) Global Tuberculosis Report 2021. Page 1. Online at <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240037021>

³ UNAIDS (2021) 021 World AIDS Day report — Unequal, unprepared, under threat: why bold action against inequalities is needed to end AIDS, stop COVID-19 and prepare for future pandemics. Page 12. Online at https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/2021_WAD_report_en.pdf

⁴ WHO (2021) World Malaria Report 2021. Page xv & xvi. Online at <https://endmalaria.org/sites/default/files/World%20Malaria%20Report%202021.pdf>

⁵ https://www.theglobalfund.org/media/10803/bm44_edp18_report_en.pdf

⁶ The three components include short-term technical assistance delivered by and for community and civil society, long-term capacity strengthening of key and vulnerable population organizations and networks and the regional coordination and communication platforms for communities and civil society

Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) representatives and outside the CCMs to help improve the C19RM process for 2021. 265 responses were received in 2020. In November 2021, the CRG Department repeated the same survey with 411 respondents.

To learn from the C19RM 2021 process, the CRG SI partners conducted surveys and documented lessons on experiences from the community with the aim of capturing learnings for future Global Fund related processes. The CRG SI in November 2021 commissioned a documentation of lessons learned and development of a compendium of case studies to further consolidate lessons from partners and internally as an organization.

The main aim for the four Community Engagement Dialogue Spaces is to validate and reflect on the findings from the 2021 process and find out if the changes The Global Fund implemented in 2021 supported community engagement as well as propose further recommendations. As the Global Fund evolves and has included pandemic preparedness response (PPR) as a specific objective in its new Strategy (2023-2028). These dialogues spaces will provide an opportunity for communities and civil society to discuss how communities' engagement in The Global Fund PPR processes should look like.

Objectives

1. To present the findings from both the C19RM 2021 survey and lessons learned case studies documentation
2. To further discuss and prioritize recommendations from the two documents
3. Continue to define civil society's comparative advantage in pandemic preparedness and response, in line with the Global Fund's new strategy for 2023-2028.

Agenda

The dialogues sessions will have the following agenda

Time	Activity description	
5 min	Welcome remarks	The Global Fund
15 min	Presentation 1: C19RM 2021 survey results	The Global Fund
25 minutes	Discussions – plenary session	All Participants
15 min	Presentation 2: C19RM 2021 case study and lessons learned by CRG SI Partners Findings	The Global Fund
25 minutes	Discussions – plenary session	All Participants
5 minutes	Closing remarks	The Global Fund

Target Participants

The target audience for these sessions are:

1. Community Rights and Gender Strategic Initiative partners
2. Civil Society and community groups
3. Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCM)

4. The Global Fund staff including the CRG department, GMD, CCM Hub
5. Technical support providers

Dates and language of sessions

Four dialogue sessions are being planned on the following dates in the following languages:

Date	Time	Language
9 Feb	11:00 – 12:30hr	English
9 Feb	16:00 – 17:30hr	Spanish
10 Feb	11:00 – 12:30hr	French
10 Feb	16:00 – 17:30hr	English

Format

The roundtables will be hosted virtually, on Zoom.