

## The Collective Service for Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE)

### Response to the White Paper on the Proposed Financial Intermediary Fund (FIF) for Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response hosted by the World Bank

**01 June 2022**

Previous health emergencies and pandemics have demonstrated the need for expanding the existing global health security financing system and mobilizing additional resources for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (PPR), particularly around the engagement of communities. The Collective Service<sup>1</sup> is an initiative that delivers structures and tools required for coordinated, sustainable and predictable community-centred approaches to community engagement across the public health and humanitarian readiness, preparedness and response efforts. We therefore understand first-hand the need for investment in PPR before the next global health crisis and applaud the progress made by key stakeholders including the G20 and WHO toward establishing a FIF for PPR, to be hosted by the World Bank Group.

As the Collective Service continues to support community engagement coordination at global, regional, and country levels to prepare for the next pandemic, we welcome the effort for a greater focus on external financing for PPR in low- and middle-income countries and agree that a multilateral financing mechanism would greatly enhance initiatives like the Collective Service in support of prevention, preparedness and community-led response efforts. While specialized donor funds have been established and have been essential to support the initial response to pandemics, including COVID-19 and Ebola Virus Disease, additional, sustainable support to prepare communities for future emergencies following the response is difficult to secure, with dire consequences particularly on partners on the ground. Therefore, the Collective Service values and supports FIF's Focus Areas for Financing, including:

- **Strengthening country-level PPR capacity** including for disease surveillance, emergency communication and management, community engagement and accountability. Community engagement is fundamental to a people-centred, integrated system for health to deliver impact, resilience and sustainability.
- **Building regional and global capacity**, as well as the capacity of local actors beyond the UN-systems who deliver last mile healthcare to the world's most remote communities and vulnerable and marginalized populations.

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<sup>1</sup> The [Collective Service for RCCE](#), a collaborative initiative of co-leading agencies IFRC, UNICEF, WHO and GOARN, was founded in June 2020 to support the RCCE pillar of the COVID-19 response to transform how the public health and the humanitarian sectors coordinate, implement, monitor, and resource collaborative approaches to community engagement at the global, regional, and country levels.

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- **TA, analytics, learning and convening** for PPR -something the Collective Service has invested in over the past two years of COVID-19 pandemic in the form of technical expertise; data generation and analysis to inform policy, programming, decision making, and community response; and social science training and capacity building for partners to identify and fill gaps for outreach to communities.

Based on our collective experience of preparing and responding to outbreaks worldwide, and intense collaborative work during COVID-19, we are aligned with the aims of the FIF, including:

- The potential for FIF to help promote coordinated and coherent approaches to PPR strengthening among actors participating in FIF by linking financing with existing country-level planning processes.
- The third principle, underpinning FIF's design to work through existing institutions engaged in PPR financing, which would promote coordination among existing institutions and serve as an integrator rather than become a silo that furthers fragmentation.
- The fifth principle, underpinning FIF's design to reflect inclusivity, while ensuring streamlined and efficient governance and operating procedures.

Effectively preventing, preparing for and responding to a pandemic fundamentally requires that people and their communities are central actors in all actions taken to address, counter and overcome the pandemic threat. However, despite numerous commitments and recommendations to 'strengthen the engagement of local communities' as key actors in pandemic preparedness and response, risk communication and community engagement remains a blind spot with fragmented investments in preparedness and response and ad-hoc reactive support during epidemics. There is an immediate need to invest in a comprehensive, robust and inclusive set of partnerships between donors, member states, organisations and implementers that truly delivers on the promise of **community empowerment and creates a culture of evidenced-based decision making and joint accountability.**

***We need now to:***

1. **SUSTAIN EFFECTIVE AND RESILIENT COMMUNITY HEALTH SYSTEMS** that enable empowered and engaged communities to be at the forefront of preparing for and responding collectively to future crises.
2. **MAKE COMMUNITY DATA COUNT AND PROMOTE ACCOUNTABILITY** to create a culture of community evidence and mutual accountability that is at the core of preparedness programmes and key to an effective response.
3. **WORK COLLECTIVELY** to promote systemic changes in the way the public health and humanitarian global architecture **coordinates, implements and resources collective approaches to risk communication and community engagement**, grounded on the adoption of **common community engagement standards and commitments** in epidemic preparedness and response.

In many countries interventions to strengthen community systems remain insufficiently acknowledged, prioritized or integrated in national plans and budgets. Approaches and investments

continue to be medically driven and focused on facilities-based approaches which are government led. Community Health Systems and the community health workforce are foundational elements of sustainable, people-centred and community-led action to achieving health resilience, a key priority identified in WHO Report by the Director General on *“Strengthening the global architecture for health emergency preparedness, response and resilience,”* prepared for the Seventy-fifth World Health Assembly.<sup>2</sup>

The Collective Service leverages the expertise and leadership of partners and key stakeholders within the public health and humanitarian sectors who are at the forefront of delivering risk communication, community engagement and accountability programming for pandemic PPR. Drawing on the Collective Service’s interagency expertise in providing coordinated, collaborative RCCE services, the Collective Service expresses its interest in:

- **Providing its collective expertise on community engagement and accountability for pandemic PPR as a member of the advisory body or technical committee in support of the governing board.**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this White Paper and the Collective Service looks forward to hearing the outcomes of the World Bank Group’s Executive Director’s review in June and the next steps for the development of the FIF.

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<sup>2</sup> *“Strengthening the global architecture for health emergency preparedness, response, and resilience,”* Prepared by the World Health Organization for the Seventy-fifth World Health Assembly, 23 May 2022.