CDD
'WHAT'S HAPPENING'

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Dear CDD Community of Practice Members,

We hope this finds all of you healthy and safe. As the COVID-19 pandemic has spread to all corners of the globe over the past weeks, we have all had to contend with significant uncertainty and disruption. However, the effects of this crisis are likely to be felt disproportionately by the poorest and most vulnerable communities, making it essential for all of us to carry on our work as best as we can. To this end, this issue of the newsletter aims to provide a sense of our collective thinking on how CDD approaches can support effective responses, as well as how to adapt operations to changing circumstances.

Specifically, below we share some initial ideas of areas in which CDD operations and approaches can support an effective response to COVID-19 in both the short and medium-term. With the importance of physical distancing to slow the spread of the virus, we also highlight some simple, low-tech solutions that teams can tap into for communications and monitoring to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and in remote areas, in place of traditional community meetings.

Much of this thinking is at an early stage and will evolve in the coming weeks. To foster real-time learning and sharing of experiences across our community, we are opening up a space for the CDD community of practice to brainstorm on how CDD operations could help as part of countries' corona virus preparedness and response planning. You can join the discussion here. Bank staff can also join the discussion on yammer here.

We look forward to hearing from you. Please share ideas, feedback on what you're doing – but also drop us a line if you need support.

With best wishes,

Susan, Nik and Ashutosh

How CDD operations and approaches can support an effective response to COVID-19

There are at least four broad thematic areas in which CDD operations and approaches can support an effective response to COVID-19 in both the short and medium term:

i. **As a targeted fiscal transfer mechanism to mitigate the economic impacts of the crisis at local levels, for example by expanding existing CDD labor-intensive public work programs, skills training or other job opportunities.**

   a. Assist poor households in areas that are particularly hard hit such as border areas with China where trade has been reduced or cut off (i.e. Laos, Vietnam, Mongolia, Myanmar). There are also industries which may be closed and put people out of work, particularly economic migrants.

   b. Use CDD programs to offset economic fallout, with a focus on hard-hit regions, communities or populations, including through labor-intensive public works. This can build on extensive experience of using CDD approaches for emergency response to crises (e.g. displacement, natural disasters).

   c. Use CDD programs to support local enterprises, including through procurement of goods at local level, and use of local labor for small scale infrastructure in vulnerable areas.

   d. Consider expanding livelihood and local entrepreneur components of CDD programs.

2. **Provide community engagement platforms to communicate culturally appropriate messages on preventative measures and proper hygiene practices.**

a. Use existing CDD platforms, including the presence of experienced facilitators trusted by communities, to support community outreach and awareness. This is already happening in Afghanistan, where the government is using mobilizers hired by the national CDD project, Citizen's Charter, to deliver messages and pamphlets to communities about the virus and need for prevention.

b. Support partnerships between facilitators, community volunteers, and community health workers to provide information and promote appropriate behaviors, including for vulnerable populations and regions (e.g. high-density places like urban slums or displacement camps, vulnerable populations including the elderly and disabled).

c. Support communications campaigns and outreach efforts by community health workers by using existing CDD projects to fund development of pamphlets, posters, etc. and through outreach via SMS, social media and radio where feasible.

d. All community engagement actions will need to exercise appropriate social distancing precautions and optimize the use of simple communication channels (radio, broadcasts, pamphlet distribution) and digital technology to the extent possible.

3. **Establish community feedback mechanisms for healthcare providers to support two-way communications, for example to build vulnerability profiles in the community and to counter misinformation and misperceptions.**

a. Use community facilitators and leaders to provide two-way information channels to healthcare providers in identifying who is most vulnerable or at high risk, and who may require support. Also ask respected local leaders to counter misinformation and misperceptions about the virus.

4. **Support community care especially for vulnerable groups, e.g. the elderly and chronically ill.**

a. Use CDD investment funds to support local health facilities;

b. Use community platforms for identification of and support to vulnerable groups while also practicing appropriate social distancing precautions;

c. Consider use of public works mechanisms to support care for elderly and those left in need (e.g., temporarily unemployed labor or returned migrant workers); improve availability of childcare; support emerging "care economy," (e.g. care for the elderly, disabled and children), including as a way of increasing female employment opportunities; and

d. Use community platforms to organize support for grocery shopping and other necessities.

How simple technologies can help with CDD communications and monitoring to prevent spread of COVID-19

Given the COVID-19 outbreak and widespread calls for physical distancing, this is a good time to look at some simple technologies to facilitate community processes. Below are some simple, low-tech solutions that teams can tap into for communications and monitoring to prevent the spread of COVID-19 through ongoing CDD operations. We would be happy to work with teams to help integrate any of the below in their platforms. These low-tech solutions can be used to communicate culturally appropriate messages on preventive measures and establish community feedback mechanisms to support two-way communications to monitor the spread of COVID-19 in target communities.

1. **WHO COVID19 Alerts via WhatsApp**

This messaging service was launched by WHO on March 20, 2020 with WhatsApp and Facebook to keep people safe from coronavirus. This is an easy-to-use messaging service with the potential to reach 2 billion people and enables WHO to get information directly into the hands of the people that need it. From government leaders to health workers and communities, this messaging service provides the latest news and information on coronavirus, including details on symptoms and how people can protect themselves and

others. It also provides the latest situation reports and numbers in real-time to help government decision-makers to protect the health of their populations. The service can be accessed [through a link](#) that opens a conversation on WhatsApp. Users can simply type "hi" to activate the conversation, prompting a menu of options that can help answer their questions about COVID-19.

2. **HealthBuddy**

HealthBuddy is a virtual health advisor that provides useful information on COVID-19 and tips on how to protect yourself and others and how to reduce the risk of infection. It has multi-channel support to integrate with the social network, instant messengers, SMS, voice calls. HealthBuddy automatically detects the language of your page and, if supported, will automatically speak in that language. It is easily integratable with other platforms. HealthBuddy is an intelligent bot that can also be adapted for SMS. HealthBuddy has been developed by ilhasoft with UNICEF and WHO and will be launched over the next few days. Ilhasoft has implemented similar low-tech communication platforms in 30 countries, including Cambodia, India, Niger, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Moldova, and Western Balkans.

3. [Covid19Info App](#) **- Tracking/educational platform with mobile phone alerts**

Covid19Info is a free mobile app where people can subscribe to receive alerts (sent via SMS, Whatsapp, or Telegram) on COVID-19 (e.g., latest case figures, updates from WHO, Ministry of Health, information on preventive measures/ social distancing). People can access the latest COVID-19 statistics and information and report cases and symptoms (including sharing their location). This reported information will be forwarded to the provincial and national response team for follow up. This app uses information from WHO and Johns Hopkins University.

4. **Amplio Talking books**

The talking books enables governments to share information with the hardest to reach communities. The talking books can create local language messaging to raise awareness of COVID 19 symptoms and prevention measures. It can provide information at the end of Talking Book messages that link users to existing COVID-19 hotlines or counseling services available. Listeners can choose the topics that interest them most, replay content as often as they want, and record their messages and feedback. The user feedback mechanisms

are used to understand barriers to practice adoption and accessing health services. In past years, Amplio has also worked with UNICEF to disseminate messages in response to cholera and ebola outbreaks.

5. **Africa's Voices - Interactive Radio**

This is an interactive radio forum with SMS feedback and follow-up SMS surveys for people to discuss the impacts of and responses to COVID-19. Listeners could participate using SMS texting to ask questions on COVID-19 and will receive individual responses (using Katikati, their platform for one-to-one communications powered by innovative human-centered technology). On March 8, Africa's Voices launched a collaboration with Radio Africa Group to air Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and interactive radio shows + 1-to-1 SMS channel to provide immediate high-quality public health content, establish a trusted communications space and garner rapid social insights for future content. Their first show featuring an expert guest virologist reached over 5 million listeners.

6. **Farm Radio - Community Radio**

The farm radio keeps people updated about COVID-19 information and gather feedback to better refine communications and responses to COVID-19. Listeners can potentially share concerns and feedback on COVID-19 through mobile-based polls (i.e., SMS on their feature phones). Listeners can answer poll questions and call in for free to ask questions/ share feedback on COVID i.e., giving a missed call to ("beeping") the station and having the station call them back. The users can also "beep" the station to hear key highlights of the radio program on COVID-19, and an interactive voice response system returns the call to play the summary. Feedback from listeners (including poll results) is automatically and immediately aggregated and viewable through Uliza. This feedback will be used to refine the COVID-19 radio program and can be shared with authorities for follow up and to inform policy.

7. **TIMBY – This is My Backyard**

TIMBY is a suite of interconnected digital tools used by communities and organizations working in offline/low-literacy situations to monitor healthcare and other areas. It is available in 18 languages and relies heavily on icons and colors for use amongst low-literacy groups. The collection system (including maps, which can consist of COVID data) works entirely offline. TIMBY has an API for offloading data to other analysis systems and can integrate in-

app messaging and machine learning. TIBMY has been used in community-based projects in Liberia, Senegal, Keyna, and Mozambique, but not as health focused.

Some Country Specific Examples

1. **MyGov Corona Helpdesk in India**

This AI based helpdesk was created by Haptik in partnership with Whatsapp for the Government of India to spread awareness and information about COVID-19 among the citizens. The helpdesk is being used for communication and monitoring, including answering queries at scale and avoid the spread of false information regarding the Covid-19 outbreak. The service can be accessed through a link that opens a conversation on WhatsApp. Within 24 hours of Bot going live, it had 1.5 million users, and 2.1 million queries answered.

2. **115 Hotzone - Disease Reporting and Information Hotline in Cambodia**

This free to the public hotline system is used by the Ministry of Health for sharing information and reporting on COVID-19. The service can be accessed by dialing 115 on any phone in Cambodia. In recent weeks, the hotline system received an average of 12000 daily calls. Reports submitted by health centers and community health workers are improving the accuracy of reports and enhancing investigation into outbreak response and prevention measures. The hotline was set up by InSTEDD iLab.

3. **HealthAlert in South Africa**

HealthAlert is a WhatsApp-based helpline to disseminates accurate and timely information about COVID-19 from the National Department of Health to the South African public. It includes a helpdesk with automated response and triage to answer users' queries and real-time data insights for national policy decisions.

Crowd-sourcing ideas on engaging in the coronavirus response

We have opened a space for the CDD community of practice to brainstorm on how our CDD operations could potentially help as part of countries' corona virus preparedness and response planning. Please join the discussion here**.** Bank staff can also join the discussion on yammer here**.**

Join Our Community

The Community-Driven Development CoP and GSG connects peers, thought leaders, and practitioners across governments, agencies, and academia, to share ideas and experiences on CDD approaches. This CoP/GSG is facilitated by the Global Programs Unit of the Social Development Global Practice at the World Bank, with inputs from around the world.

To share papers, project news, interesting blogs, or upcoming events on CDD and other relevant themes with the CDD CoP, please email the CDD email or Ashutosh Raina.

To sign up for CDD CoP membership and receive our monthly newsletter, please click here

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