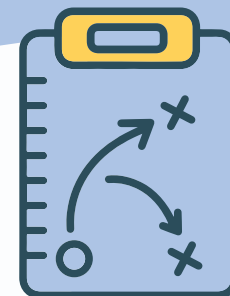


Emergency Preparedness Plan for HIV Service Providers in Yemen



2021





Background

In August 2021, a situation assessment of needs was carried out to explore the impact of the COVID-19 on HIV services and PLHIV in Yemen. The overarching goal of this study was to highlight the challenges that HIV service providers have encountered in the provision of HIV services, the barriers that has hindered PLHIV access to care and the mitigation strategies that were adopted by HIV service providers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings of this study were used to inform the development of the emergency preparedness plan for HIV service providers in Yemen by building on their previous response in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

What is the purpose of this plan?

The Emergency Preparedness (EPP) is designed to guide the preparedness and the initial response of HIV service providers in Yemen to ensure their readiness and timely response in emergency situations.

Who is this plan for?

The proposed EPP can benefit the leadership of the national aid program (NAP), and all stakeholders that are directly involved in the development, design, and implementation of HIV services in Yemen including Ministry of Public Health and Population (MOPHP), CSOs, UN (WHO, UNICEF, and IOM) and international development agencies (Global Fund) that are active in supporting HIV services in Yemen.

What is the scope of the plan?

According to WHO (2017), Emergency preparedness is defined as “the knowledge and capacities and organizational systems developed by governments, response and recovery organizations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from the impacts of likely, imminent, emerging, or current emergencies”. As such, the proposed EPP scope is limited to the pre-emergency actions that can enhance the preparedness of HIV service providers and their initial response under adverse emergency situations. Thus, the proposed plan doesn’t cover/ include the actions needed for the comprehensive response/ recovery phase of the emergency planning cycle.



EPP Guiding Principles

- Emergency preparedness is a dynamic process that requires continuous monitoring, and assessment based on well-established indicators to be able to assess areas for improvement, and revisit priorities
- EPP should build on existing activities and initiatives that proved to be successful in Yemen
- Collaboration, coordination, and mobilization of resources are the key elements for effective emergency preparedness and response plans
- Strengthening resources and capacities for key HIV service providers are at the heart of the EPP for Yemen

How was the plan developed?

The development of the proposed plan builds on the outcome of the assessment study that was conducted in Yemen during the month of August 2021. The study findings revealed insights on the response strategies that proved to be effective in mitigating the challenges imposed by the public crisis, as well as the gaps that has hampered service providers in taking timely response during the crisis.

Building on these experiences, the proposed EPP aims at addressing the main gaps that were identified in the study to enhance service providers preparedness and capacities in response to the COVID-19. The proposed EPP activities were categorized under the following three areas of work that were identified by WHO Strategic Framework for Emergency Preparedness (2017) as the core elements for emergency preparedness:

1. **Governance:** At the governance level, the recommended EPP actions aim at addressing the gaps in national policies to ensure that ongoing national policies and plans do not exclude PLHIV and address the weaknesses in collaboration and coordination between existing national, international, and local stake holders.
2. **Capacities:** Under this area of work, the EPP recommended actions aim at strengthening HIV service providers, and CSOs access to essential and reliable information, strengthening service providers capacities in providing HIV services, and improving communication means and channels to reach out to PLHIV in times of crisis.
3. **Resources:** The focus of the EPP under this area, aims at addressing the financial challenges and the needs for better supply of medical equipment's and commodities as well as a capable cadre of professionals that can sustain HIV services in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Domain I: Governance

Strategic Objectives	Recommended Actions
<p>KPs needs and rights are considered and prioritized in national policies and emergency plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAP to lead and advocate for reactivation of national policies that protect the rights of PLHIV • NAP to lead and advocate for the inclusion of PLHIV in the humanitarian emergency fund in Yemen • Map out the weaknesses in the government emergency response plan and its impact on the health of PLHIV • Increase the awareness of decision -makers on the work of the national aids program, needs of PLHIV, the challenges that are hindering CSOs performance, and the policies that proved to be harmful to KPs/ harm reduction CSOs in times of the pandemic.
<p>Establish collaboration and coordination mechanisms between national and international stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAP to set up a governance structure that can develop, lead, and implement the multisectoral emergency preparedness and response plan for HIV services. The governance body should include the various ministries involved, such as the ministries of health, education, justice, media, and UN and international development agencies (WHO, and OCHA) • Ensure that the multisectoral body has adequate funding resources to sustain its operation • Develop a list of key stakeholders (national, international, local, and CSOs) • Define and map the mandate and strengths of each stakeholder to identify each organization's areas of strengths, so that each can lead in its area of expertise • Work with authorities to integrate the HIV preparedness plan within the national EPP plan

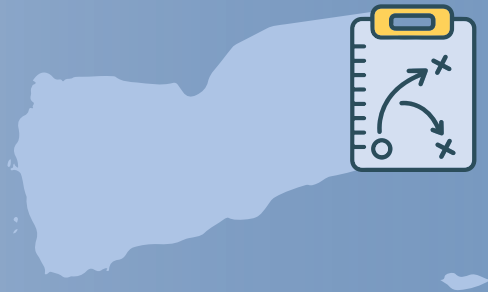
Domain II: Capacities

Strategic Objectives	Recommended Actions
<p>Service providers have easy access to timely and reliable information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct capacity and situation analysis of HIV services in Yemen to understand gaps and challenges • Setup and manage a shared database for PLHIV in Yemen • Strengthen the existing surveillance system in Yemen by enhancing human resources capacity, and providing technical and financial support • Conduct KAP surveys to understand obstacles that hinders PLHIV access to essential services • Review, share, and discuss the existing information with relevant stakeholders • Ensure that regular reports are made available to all stakeholders
<p>KPs can have access and know where to seek services in times of crisis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen CSOs capacities and resources to expand the scope of HIV services in Yemen • Conduct a mapping of HIV services providers to develop a directory of services that can be shared with PLHIV • Develop and train community outreach teams that can be mobilized during emergencies • Work with health actors to identify potential new sites, and innovative models for the provision of HIV services • Allocate funding resources to strengthen the delivery services for ART • Develop common systems for referral for HIV services by improving existing referral systems • Develop protocols to ensure safety of beneficiaries and staff in times of crisis • Sustain the revised protocols for ART distribution processes
<p>KPs can have access to essential and timely information in times of crisis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand KPs most preferred communication channels • Establish multiple communication channels, including telephone, WhatsApp, and social media to communicate with KPs • Collaborate with other stakeholders to prepare and develop a list of key messages targeting KPs • Train community outreach teams to deliver messages • Develop targeted communication material • Establish a hotline • Train workforce on hotline responses



Domain III: Resources

Strategic Objectives	Recommended Actions
Allocate new sources of funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and implement a fundraising plan• Establish an emergency fund for PLHIV• Work with international donor agencies to advocate for more funding for HIV services• Develop fundraising capacities including grant writing• Engage all stakeholders in identifying and approaching potential funding opportunities• Work with international donor agencies (OCHA) to include PLHIV in humanitarian assistance programs
Develop logistics/ mechanisms to ensure availability of essential medicines and preventive supplies and medical support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop procurement and inventory management protocols for HIV treatment facilities• Work with HIV facilities to allocate funding opportunities for essential medical supplies and commodities• Conduct mapping of essential medical supplies and commodities that need to be stocked in case of emergency (ARV, agents for HIV test and viral load screening)
Develop Human resources surge capacity plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plan for staffing requirements in times of crisis and develop competency frameworks for front liner training• Establish a roster of volunteers and experts that can be mobilized to support CSOs operation when needed and train them• Develop protocols for human resources management during crisis• Carry out a training needs analysis of staff and train workforce on emergency response tools• Strengthen CSOs community volunteer programs• Train PLHIV on emergency response tools



Emergency Preparedness Plan for HIV Service Providers in Yemen

REFERENCE

WHO, 2017. A strategic framework for emergency preparedness. Retrieved from <https://apps.who.int/iris/rest/bitstreams/1082021/retrieve>

Middle East and North Africa Harm Reduction Association

Hayek Roundabout, BBAC Building, Sin el Fil, Lebanon
+961 1 49 32 11 | info@menahra.org | www.menahra.org

