

DATA READINESS CASE STUDY

Data Readiness Experiences from CP3: Perspectives from DRC, Guinea, and Kenya



BACKGROUND

Since 2017, the IFRC has been implementing the multi-country Community Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness Programme (CP3), with funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). CP3 is supporting communities, National Societies (NS), and other partners to prevent, detect and respond to disease threats. In doing so, they can play a significant role in preparing for future health risks.

CP3 is currently active in 7 countries: Indonesia, Uganda, Cameroon, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone and Guinea. While the program adapts to each country's health priorities, a common action point across the countries has been to improve the uptake of data use and digital resources in response planning and preparedness.

Teams can utilize the Data Readiness Framework, developed by the American Red Cross and available on [PrepareCenter.org](https://www.preparecenter.org), to identify their data readiness priorities for CP3. Common priorities across CP3 programme countries have emerged, including building data literacy, improving strategic use of primary and secondary data, and strengthening capacity in data collection and management. Each team can apply the Data Readiness Framework in a contextually appropriate way so that it meets their own priorities and enhances use of data for decision-making.

METHODS

The following are key findings shared by CP3 programme colleagues in DRC, Guinea, and Kenya. They were interviewed about how the use of data in their CP3 programme or the National Society has changed over the course of CP3 programme implementation. Responses were grouped by common theme and are presented here by the area of the Data Readiness Framework to which they pertain.

FINDINGS

Outcome 1.1. Data Culture

National Societies recognize the value and importance of data in their work and actively promote data skills and use.

Through support from the CP3 program, there has been noted uptick in the demand for data and appropriate data products to support decision making. The culture of data is becoming stronger, meaning value is placed on building data skills, producing data products, and regularly incorporating data in decision-making processes.

Examples include:

- **Kenya:** Surveillance teams at the county and sub-county levels have expressed appreciation for how important data has become to their work, creating evidence for decisions and preventing duplication of efforts. Programme staff created their own mobile data collection tool for use during school monitoring visits, so that data from the visits can be cleaned, validated, visualized, and packaged for NS branch offices.



- **DRC:** Data is now driving the organization of volunteer deployments so that the NS can easily geolocate where the volunteers are positioned and what activities they are working on. This change in data culture can be attributed to CP3, which helped put a system in place for validating, standardizing, and updating health zone mapping files.
- **Guinea:** Informal data working groups have been formed where there are active discussions on mapping and utilisation of mobile tools for data collection generating more excitement around data skills building and digital products.

Outcome 1.2. Data Literacy

National Societies have the capacity to collect, clean, store and interpret data.

CP3 programme staff helped to orient National Societies to the benefits of mobile data collection and cloud data storage. After being introduced to Kobo, a tool commonly used across CP3 programme countries for data collection, teams have more confidence in the timeliness, accuracy, management, and protection of data.

Examples include:

- **Kenya:** Data collected through CP3 has fully transitioned from paper-based to digital. In this digital format, teams can perform custom analytics to answer the questions they are interested in. To build data literacy across teams, CP3 programme staff routinely engaged with GIS consultants to better understand how to interpret the insights in the data, and how those insights can be communicated to different target audiences. This commitment to building data literacy led to more maps being produced, displayed, and actively used for programmatic activities. Capacity-building efforts cascaded down from the national level to county teams, who are now also able to develop maps and make better use of the insights within the data.
- **DRC:** With increased confidence in data collected, the NS interprets and disseminates data to stakeholders, including the IFRC network (through the GO platform), and other organizations (through Humanitarian Data Exchange).
- **Guinea:** Prior to CP3, data was often stored on individual computers, creating challenges with data access and risk of loss of data. Their new cloud-based data storage system, combined with adoption of mobile data collection, have enabled the NS to better use data for decision-making. For example, the NS expressed that data-based decision making improved their response time during the 2021 Ebola operation. The NS also frequently refers to the IFRC Data Playbook to reinforce key data literacy topics.

“Data readiness for effective decision making is part of the bigger CP3 strategic plan. Data collection and use procedures are well documented and budgeted for.”

– CP3 Representative, Kenya

Outcome 3.1. Primary Data

National Societies have the capacity to collect additional information needed for an operation (e.g. rapid assessments) to complement existing secondary data.

Several CP3 country programmes introduced the implementation of a “data grid”, a regularly updated database of



secondary data resources relevant for that programme's context. The objective of a data grid is to have secondary data easily accessible during operations and program implementation, and to inform planning for primary data collection. A CP3 representative in Kenya says that "the data grid" has made work easier by ensuring all the sources are in a one stop shop". Understanding what data already exists helps to prevent duplicative data collection, saving time and resources.

As noted above, introducing mobile data collection has both streamlined the data collection process and improved quality of data collected. Efforts are still being made to optimize both primary and secondary data collection across CP3 program countries. Here are some examples of how improved primary data collection practices have impacted CP3 and other NS programmes.

- **Kenya:** Through a combination of improved primary data collection tools and rigorous training, the NS has seen enhanced satisfaction with the way data collection teams are mobilized. The organizer, or person selecting the teams, now has adequate training on data collection themselves, so they know what to look for in terms of understanding the data collection capacities of their teams.
- **DRC:** Many NS programmes, including CP3, are now using Kobo for mobile data collection and a cloud-based storage system. Surveys are developed by program teams and implemented in the field with external support.
- **Guinea:** The NS has developed several mobile data collection survey forms for various activities, including monitoring dignified and secure burial activities, community engagement and accountability, and psychosocial support activities. Mobile data collection allows volunteers to report on progress of the activities carried out in the field and data quality can be monitored in real time. The NS has also institutionalized the practice of searching secondary data sources and primary data collected from other organizations prior to embarking on their own primary data collection.

NEXT STEPS

Another important use case for the Data Readiness Framework is to help teams uncover where further improvements can be made. CP3 representatives interviewed acknowledged that secondary data use and data analysis and visualization are among the areas that need more time and support in order for substantial improvements to be seen. Teams can review the Data Readiness Framework and prioritize areas where they would like to focus and eventually advance.

CONCLUSIONS

The Data Readiness Framework, when used as a guide, can support programme teams like CP3 to make gradual improvements in the way they are collecting, managing, analysing, and using data. In practice, that translates to faster response time, evidence-based decision making, and continuous evaluation and improvement integrated into programmes and operations.

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