

Rwanda assessed at Level 4 in all RCCE indicators according to SPAR(State Party Self-Assessment Annual Reporting Tool) 2023.

A. RCCE System for Emergencies

		Indicators
Level	C10.1. RCCE system for emergencies	
Level 1	Mechanisms ⁶⁴ for coordination of RCCE functions ⁶⁵ and resources ⁶⁶ are under development, or coordination of RCCE functions and resources is conducted on an ad hoc basis	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2	Mechanisms for coordination of RCCE functions and resources, including plans, SOPs and formal government arrangements are developed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3	Mechanisms for coordination of RCCE functions and resources, including plans, SOPs and formal government arrangements are developed and being implemented at the national level ⁶⁷	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4	Mechanisms for coordination of RCCE functions and resources, including plans, SOPs and formal government arrangements are developed and being implemented at the national and intermediate levels ⁶⁸	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Level 5	Mechanisms for coordination of RCCE functions and resources are implemented at the national, intermediate and local levels; are fully integrated into emergency response systems; and are exercised, reviewed, evaluated and updated on a regular basis ⁶⁹	<input type="checkbox"/>

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B. Risk Communication

		Indicators
Level	C10.2. Risk communication	
Level 1	Mechanisms for public communication and/or media relations, including infodemics, are under development or implemented on an ad hoc basis ⁷⁰	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2	Mechanisms for public communication and/or media relations, including infodemics, are developed but not fully implemented with significant gaps ⁷¹	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3	Mechanisms for public communication and/or media relations, including infodemics, are developed and activities are being implemented at the national level	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4	Mechanisms for public communication and/or media relations, including infodemics, are developed and activities are being implemented and coordinated across all sectors at national and intermediate levels	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Level 5	Mechanisms for public communication and/or media relations, including infodemics, are developed and activities are being implemented and coordinated across sectors ⁷² at national, intermediate and local levels, and information is shared in a timely manner. ⁷³ The mechanisms and related activities are exercised (as applicable), reviewed, evaluated and updated on a regular basis	<input type="checkbox"/>

Rwanda assessed at Level 4 in all RCCE indicators according to SPAR 2023 report.

C. Community Engagement

		Indicators
Level	C10.3. Community engagement ⁷⁴	
Level 1	Mechanisms for systematic community engagement in public health emergencies, including guidelines and/or SOPs, are under development or community engagement activities ⁷⁵ are implemented on an ad hoc basis ⁷⁶	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2	Mechanisms for systematic community engagement in public health emergencies, including guidelines and/or SOPs, have been developed but not implemented	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 3	Mechanisms for systematic community engagement in public health emergencies, including guidelines and/or SOPs, have been developed, disseminated and community engagement activities are being implemented and supported at the national level	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 4	Mechanisms for systematic community engagement in public health emergencies, including guidelines and/or SOPs, have been developed, disseminated and community engagement activities are being implemented and supported at national and intermediate levels	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Level 5	Mechanisms for systematic community engagement in public health emergencies, including guidelines and/or SOPs, have been developed, disseminated, and community engagement activities are being implemented and supported at the national, intermediate and local levels. Qualitative and quantitative socio-behavioural research is conducted; ⁷⁷ and mechanisms and activities for community engagement are exercised (as applicable), reviewed, evaluated and updated on a regular basis	<input type="checkbox"/>

Key gaps identified within our country existing response plans and processes and key actions to take forward to address these (based on our SPAR report 2023):

RCCE systems for emergency to level 5

Key gaps:

- NHEROP guidelines provide procedures for RCCE, but they are not regularly reviewed and updated to ensure relevance and effectiveness.
- Although resources are implemented and integrated into emergency response systems, they are not evaluated on a regular basis to identify areas for improvement.

Actions:

- Establish regular review and evaluation process.
- Continuous updating of NHEROP Guidelines and coordination mechanisms.
- Strengthen integration of resources across all levels.
- Assign responsibility for review and evaluation.
- Establish timelines for updating procedures.
- Allocate resources for training and capacity-building.
- Commitment to continuous improvement.
- Invitation for collaboration on further enhancements.

Key gaps identified within our country existing response plans and processes and they key actions you will take forward to address these (based on our SPAR report 2023):

Strengthening Risk Communication

Key gaps:

- While mechanisms for public communication and media relations, including infodemics management, are developed and implemented, there is a gap in comprehensive evaluation and assessment of these mechanisms.

Actions:

- Establish structured evaluations to assess communication effectiveness.
- Enhance data analysis for measuring communication impact.
- Develop robust feedback channels for real-time adjustments.
- Provide training for effective communication during emergencies.
- Foster collaboration among stakeholders for coordinated communication efforts.

Key gaps identified within your country's existing response plans and processes and they key actions you will take forward to address these (based on SPAR report 2023):

Improving community engagement to level 5

Key gaps:

- While guidelines and SOPs for community engagement are developed and disseminated, there is a gap in conducting consistent qualitative and quantitative socio-behavioral research to assess their impact post campaigns.
- Although community engagement activities are implemented and supported at various levels, there is a need for regular KAP surveys to measure their impact before, during, and after outbreaks and alerts.
- Despite engagement of partners in RCCE-TWGs and conducting cascade RCCE trainings, there is a gap in collecting comprehensive data to assess the effectiveness of community engagement initiatives.
- Lack of effective feedback mechanisms to gather input from community members and stakeholders on the effectiveness of community engagement activities, hindering opportunities for improvement.

Actions:

- Developed and disseminated guidelines/SOPs for systematic community engagement in public health emergencies.
- Implementation and support of community engagement activities at national, district, and sector levels.
- Engagement of partners in RCCE-TWGs from National to Community level, including CHWs.
- Conducted cascade RCCE trainings in partnership with National police, Religious and local leaders, and local and international media.
- Need for consistent qualitative and quantitative socio-behavioral research to set baselines and assess impact post campaigns.
- Conduct regular KAP surveys to measure impact of RCCE activities before, during, and after outbreaks and alerts.

Recommendations and key actions for ensuring a community-centred response for an outbreak

- **Organize regular community drills and simulations to test preparedness and improve response capabilities among community members.** **Actions:** **1)** Schedule and organize periodic community drills and simulations to enhance preparedness and response capabilities among community members, **2)** Coordinate with local authorities and community leaders to ensure active participation and engagement, **3)** Develop and implement monitoring and evaluation systems to assess the effectiveness of community engagement activities, **4)** Conduct regularly review and analyze feedback from community members and stakeholders to identify areas for improvement
- **Incorporate traditional healing practices and cultural beliefs into outbreak response strategies to ensure cultural sensitivity and acceptance within the community.** **Action:** **1)** Conduct cultural sensitivity training sessions for healthcare workers and responders.
- **Provide adequate training, resources, and support to community health workers to effectively engage with communities, disseminate accurate information, and identify potential outbreaks early.** **Actions:** **1)** Develop and deliver comprehensive training programs for CHWs on effective communication, outbreak identification, and community engagement, **2)** Provide ongoing support, resources, and supervision to CHWs to ensure they can effectively engage with communities and disseminate accurate information, **3)** Implement monitoring and evaluation systems to assess the effectiveness of community engagement activities, **4)** Develop coordination plan to coordinate with government agencies, NGOs, and international partners to leverage resources and expertise for effective implementation of community-centered action plans.

— Actions for how to ensure cross-border RCCE collaboration before, during and after an outbreak

- Forge bilateral agreements with neighboring countries to facilitate information sharing, joint training, and coordinated response efforts in the event of cross-border outbreaks.
- Organize regular cross-border trainings and workshops on risk communication, community engagement, and outbreak response protocols to enhance preparedness and collaboration among neighboring countries.
- Develop standardized protocols and communication channels for cross-border response, ensuring seamless coordination and information exchange during emergencies.
- Foster relationships with international organizations and regional networks to leverage expertise, resources, and best practices for cross-border collaboration and response to health emergencies

Conclusion

SPAR 2023 recommendations and actions aim to enhance community-centered RCCE response strategies in Rwanda and foster effective collaboration with neighboring countries to mitigate the spread of infectious diseases across borders, thus advancing the country from level 4 to level 5.

Murakoze

