Facilitator's Guide and Interactive Exercises

Emergency Risk Communication Capacity Building Workshop

Through this intensive training workshop, participants will be provided with an advanced track of risk communication, including case study examples and simulation and decision-making exercises. Focus areas include the basic principles of effective risk communication, coordinating stakeholders and communication partners, engaging affected communities, developing messages, and managing media and social media demands. The curriculum and exercises will provide a risk communication foundation for future disease outbreaks and public health threats.

TEPHINET
Training Programs in Epidemiology and
Public Health Interventions Network

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How to use this facilitator's guide:

This facilitator guide provides a broad overview of the overall workshop. Each element of the workshop (the presentation of content, the case studies, the scenario, etc.) rely on a series of PowerPoint slide decks. Specific information for individual modules is found as speaker notes within those PowerPoint slide decks.

It is suggested that first time facilitators of this workshop take the time to review all materials and presentations well in advance of the workshop delivery. Similarly, as facilitators will likely be responsible for day-to-day logistics of the workshop, it would also make sense to consider which handouts should be printed out in advance for participants and which can remain in digital pdf form.

Overview: facilitator's guide and interactive exercises

Acknowledgement

Overview

Introduction to the workshop

This training workshop is designed to be conducted over two and a half days by expert facilitators from staff members of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S. CDC) and/or other partner organizations, as needed. The workshop is designed to be flexible enough to accommodate anywhere from 10 - 40 health authority communicators as participants. Based on needs assessments conducted, an instructional design approach was developed that includes:

- A scenario-driven, highly interactive program, consistent with adult learning principles and techniques;

- A focus on a CODI-19-like virus (with a back-up scenario focused on measles)

- An additional focus on core crisis and risk communication strategies that include those in the existing U.S. CDC Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) Program—adapted for distinct cultural contexts and varying resource realities

- Skills-building sessions highlighting needs described from the region

- A step-by-step ERC plans development process enabling participating countries to identify nationally focused ERC plan components needed and to begin writing these components for their national plans

Goal

The goal of the workshop is to familiarize national government officials and in-country partners with tried and tested risk communication principles and best practices. Although a COVID-19-like virus (or a measles outbreak) is the focus of the scenario work, the principles covered are relevant and can also be applied to other crises or emergency events.

Through this workshop, participants will be provided with advanced crisis and risk communication methods, presented in both theoretical and practical learning methodologies to strengthen skills for dealing with public health crises. This workshop will provide participants with foundational crisis and risk communication knowledge that can be applied to future disease outbreaks and public health threats.

Workshop format

This is a simulation-based workshop with integrated, interactive exercises. It is designed to engage participants in realistic decision-making scenarios, which gives them an expanded view of what it is like to:

- **WORK** with decision makers;
- **COORDINATE** communications amongst stakeholders and partners;
- **ENGAGE** affected communities;
- **MESSAGE** effectively to better ensure critical recommendations are adopted by target audiences; and
- **MANAGE** media and social media demands

Structure

The workshop comprises of the following initial overview module and 6 instructional modules:

- **Overview Module**: Workshop Introduction - Communicating about risks amidst uncertainty
- **Module 1**: Crisis Risk Communication Essentials - Key concepts for effective health-related crisis risk communication
- **Module 2**: Stakeholders, Partners & Community - Choosing the right partners at the right time for the right purpose
- **Module 3**: Persuasion & Behavior Change - Moving beyond 'deficit-model' thinking and toward impactful communication outcomes
- **Module 4**: Messaging for Target Audiences - Developing the right messages for the right purpose at the right time
- **Module 5**: Working with Journalists and News Media - Responsive communication saves lives and strengthens crisis response
- **Module 6**: Understanding & Utilizing Social Media - Leveraging new communication tools to engage hard-to-reach publics

While each module is unique in its emphasis and specific structure, the common teaching tools employed across the overall workshop are as follows:

Facilitator presentation of information: Lecture-style content where the speaker notes guide the facilitator through the key points to make when presenting the material. While we refer to this as "lecture-style," the content was specifically designed to be interactive and to foster dialogue. The facilitator presentation of information includes many of the approaches/tools noted in the remainder of this list as means to keep audiences engaged, including the five tools that follow below.

Interactive polling questions: The polling questions are designed to break up sections of the facilitator presentation to heighten audience engagement and either prime audiences about an upcoming topic (i.e., get them thinking about content that is about to be presented) or reinforce or otherwise illustrate a point that was made previously. While the responses typically have objectively correct and incorrect answers (provided in the slide decks in the slide immediately following the question), they are also discussion starters for the participants.

Group discussions: Like the polling questions, these have been inserted into the facilitator presentation to make the content more engaging and to either prime audiences or reinforce a point. These are generally open-ended questions with a large number of potentially correct responses.

Case studies: These are designed to reinforce or otherwise highlight a specific point from the facilitator presentation. These are real world examples of the communication practices outlined in the slide decks. These are done to provide some concrete examples of theoretical content and to show under what circumstances the content being presented has occurred in the real world.

Running scenario: These are typically included at the conclusion of each module. They follow a disease outbreak similar to COVID-19 (or, the back-up scenario is focused on a measles outbreak). With each module, more information is added to the scenario and new questions are posed for the participants to work in small groups to answer.

Small group exercises: Several modules include a small group exercise (e.g., stakeholder maps, message mapping) that goes beyond the information presented in the scenarios. These are again focused on enhancing the interactivity of the overall workshop, but also to get participants working on a useful application of the content being learned.

As can be seen from the descriptions of the various tools above, we have placed a strong emphasis on engaging participants, encouraging discussion, and promoting decision-making when faced with difficult choices of when and how to communicate to the public and stakeholders during an emergency.

Learning Objectives

At the end of the workshop participants will be able to:

- Describe risk communication principles and effective practices for a public health crisis communication plan or use in a public health emergency/crisis response.

- Apply crisis risk communication principles and effective practices in a public health crisis plan or actual response.

- Describe why use of crisis risk communication principles will increase the likelihood that public health actions and recommendations will be understood and accepted by the public, at-risk populations, news media, and others.

- Please note that specific objectives are provided for each module. These should be reviewed prior to the presentation of the content.

Set up and role of facilitator and participants

Participants should be organized into small workgroups of approximately 4-5 participants. The groups can be mixed according to country represented, job roles, and experience with risk communication. This helps better establish working networks that will be needed during actual emergencies.

The majority of the training modules involves an early presentation of information by the facilitator. The presentation of information includes sets of polling questions and interactive discussion to enhance audience engagement. Modules will generally conclude with a scenario situation, which asks the participants to take the information they have just learned and to apply it to a COVID-19-like virus situation that speaks to the content addressed in the module. Based on the information given, each group must work together in order to respond to questions and complete specific assignments.

Facilitator profile

To successfully lead this workshop, the ideal facilitator should have:

- Experience in leading workshops for adult learners
- Experience in public communication, such as in areas of mobilization, health promotion, or media relations
- Experience in emergency risk or crisis communication
- Familiarity with public health and/or public health systems
- Experience adapting to low resource settings

Participant profile

The intended audience for these trainings includes communication professionals that may have a role in emergency response. In some cases, where there may not be an available communications professional, participants can be individuals who may take on a communications role in an emergency response, even if that is not their official capacity. This may include leaders or other spokespersons. If possible, it's also suggested to have other non-communication response leaders and public health decision-makers who may need to clearly understand how to implement ERC response methods.

Ideal number of participants

In order to effectively facilitate discussion in workgroups and in plenary, the ideal number of workshop participants is 10 - 40 participants, and allowing for small workgroups of 3-5 individuals.

Program Elements

Workshop materials by module

Module 0
- CERC: Specific Hazards under CERC
- International Health Regulation (IHR): An Overview
- WHO Joint Evaluation Tool – Risk Communication Indicators
- WHO Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) COVID-19
- Emergency Risk Communication (ERC) planning templates

Module 1
- Crisis Risk Communication Plan – example template
- Tips for Managing Uncertainty
- WHO Communicating and Managing Uncertainty in the COVID-19 pandemic
- Determining when Transparency is Needed: 4 Key Questions
- WHO Social Stigma associated with COVID-19
- Small Group Exercise Worksheet

Module 2
- Five Ways to Engage Communities in Public Health Responses (Revised/Updated)
- Tips for Culturally Sensitive Communication (Revised/Updated)
- Small Group Exercise 1 Worksheet
- Small Group Exercise 2 Worksheet

Module 3
- Small Group Exercise Worksheet

Module 4
- Nine Principles of Message Mapping
- Message Map Example – COVID-19
- Small Group Exercise Worksheet

Module 5
- Spokesperson tips
- Small Group Exercise Worksheet

Module 6
- Social Media Best Practices and Tips

Scenario-driven group work exercises

All modules, with the exception of the "Overview Module," incorporate a scenario situation, which is followed by some form of small group exercise. This section provides a brief overview of the scenarios and the group work those scenarios lead to.

The scenarios are short (typically two slides, with notes) and simple, with little technical detail and information. This is intentional as experience has shown that when engaging groups of professionals, the less detail, the less likely the session slows down from technical arguments. When introducing the scenario, it may be useful to say to the group:

"This scenario is intentionally simple and does not pretend to be technically accurate, we need you to suspend belief and try and see the scenario as a tool to get to the key emergency risk communication issues we want to explore."

"There are no secrets or twists in the scenario, you don't need to take extensive notes as we will provide you with a synopsis that provides all the key information you need."

"But this is your scenario, you can shift and shape as you see fit so long as we remain focused on the emergency risk communication challenge. It's a tool, nothing more."

The scenario should be read out loud to the group. Then, the groups work together to decide on the challenges posed (these are posed both in the slide decks, as well as in the form of handouts as part of the "Participant Guide"). Anywhere between 20-30 minutes should be set aside for each scenario activity. This suggested timing would also include an opportunity for a group or groups to report back their work and to have a group dialogue about that work. However, the facilitator should try and gauge how the groups are doing and how much time would be appropriate. The exercise should encourage an appreciation of the intense and compressed emergency response environment, but also create space for good discussion and debate.

When the group work is completed and the group(s) report back their responses to the questions, it is likely that there will be a range of different opinions put forth. This is a good thing. It reflects the nature of these challenges, and also the subjective nature of so many emergency risk communication challenges. Use the diversity of suggested actions to have a constructive discussion among the participants. We know that adults learn best from one another and your job is to try and let that occur through some of the organic discussions that ensue.

If time runs out, and the module is transitioning into a break, encourage the discussions to continue during those times.

Emergency Risk Communication (ERC) case study library

A library of Emergency Risk Communication (ERC) case studies have been developed for use during this workshop. Some case studies are already embedded in the module PowerPoint presentations. However, there are more available. See the table below for the case study topics and proposed module placement.

Case Study	Year	Current Module	Case Study Title and brief description of focus
H1N1 Mexico	2009	Overview	Mexico and communicating about Influenza A(H1N1): Focused on communicating quickly about an outbreak of influenza amidst much uncertainty about its spread and severity
MERS CoV South Korea	2015	1	South Korea outbreak of MERS- CoV: Focused on balancing concern over stigmatization with the benefits of being transparent and open about health measures, including care.
Polio Nigeria	2003	2	Nigeria Outbreak of Polio: Focused on coordinating effective communication in a context of mistrust, and cultural and religious tension
Ebola West Africa	2013	2	Ebola Virus in West Africa: Focused on ensuring compliance of citizens with Ebola reporting of self and others; families hiding possibly infected loved ones and fearing stigmatization
COVID-19 in USA		3	Mask Use During US Coronavirus Outbreak: Focused on attempts to communicate with citizens who are ignoring public health guidelines around mask wearing
SARS in Hong Kong	2003	3 (hidden slides)	Mask Use During SARS Outbreak in Hong Kong: Focused on Hong Kong citizens who were engaged in (well-meaning), but ultimately counter-productive behaviors (mask wearing)
Marburg in Angola	2005	3 (hidden slides)	Marburg Hemorrhagic Fever in Angola: Focused on overcoming initial failures to properly understand the risk perceptions of the affected community
Polio outbreak in Laos PDR	2015	4	Laos PDR polio outbreak: Focused on messaging based on a knowledge of the distinct culture, language, and religious and social practices of a target audience
H7N9 China	2013	6	H7N9 Avian Influenza in Jiangsu, China: Focused on the role of social media in controlling the spread of information about a disease outbreak

Guidance on using module presentations

As part of the overall set of materials, we provide a workshop plan agenda, complete with expected timelines for the content. These are the best estimates we have based on a piloting of the workshop. However, the focus placed on engagement, small group work, and discussions, as well as variation in how different people will present the content, mean facilitators must be flexible in their approach.

Most modules have more than enough slides to cover the content needed to meet the learning objectives. As a facilitator, please gauge the time allowed for each session and determine which slides you feel most comfortable presenting. It is highly recommended to "hide" slides that you would prefer not to present prior in the workshop. By hiding slides, the session will time out correctly and participants will still receive them in printouts or on a memory stick.

Be prepared to alter the expected timeline of the overall workshop based on how quickly or slowly you progress through the initial overview module and module 1.

Recommendations for digital workshop delivery

The most obvious way to deliver the workshop is to use web conferencing and/or online meeting solutions. These allow for the delivery of content, whether in real-time or pre- recorded, without the need to actually meet anyone face-to-face. Many of these tools, like Zoom, have short learning curves, leaving you more time for the actual delivery of content, rather than for troubleshooting of technical problems. What follows are a set of tips for conducting your workshop in an online environment. It is worth noting that these are guidelines for adapting the existing materials. To truly move an in-person workshop into an online one requires a complete overhaul of the course materials and should be led by an instructor with previous experience working in the online space. Nevertheless, some general principles can be employed to help transition an existing workshop into one fit for online delivery.

Tips for Online Delivery

Keys to effective content delivery:

1. **Regardless of the platform you choose, and despite noting earlier that these often have short learning curves, you should familiarize yourself with your chosen technology and confirm the technical requirements well before the start of the workshop.** Even if you have used a platform before, anticipate that there will be updates and changes to how things operate. Even small changes in technology can create significant delays when delivering content. Many online meeting tools (e.g., Zoom) have features like breakout rooms that allow you to divide participants into groups that you can visit separate from the rest of the participants. Some of these tools also allow you to do polling, which could be helpful for some of the polling questions that are included in the workshop materials. These tools also generally have screen-sharing options so participants can report their work back to the entire group. This can be useful for many of the small group exercises that included in the workshop materials.

2. **Determine how you are going to provide workshop lectures.** For smaller groups, a live (synchronous) lecture often works well; for large classes, it is often better to have a pre-recorded (asynchronous) lecture followed by some form of a "live" discussion on a platform like Zoom to complement the pre-recorded materials. Consider that participants may be living in different time zones when making this determination. It is worth noting that pre-recorded content is better for accessibility. Zoom lectures can be pre-recorded and its URL can be shared via email. Similarly, PowerPoint offers an option to record a slide with narration and slide timings.

3. **Set up a central place to house all course materials.** If those materials are being shared with the participants, have clear instructions regarding how to access them. Please note that the place you choose to house your materials may need to be separate from the platform you use to deliver that content. In other words, while you may facilitate discussion through a platform like Zoom, you may need to house your materials on a platform like Dropbox.

4. **Similar to #3 above, consider whether you will need a "collaboration tool."** These tools not only allow you to transfer files between individuals, but also to co-create documents by groups of participants. Examples of these collaborative platforms include Google Drive, Microsoft OneDrive, Apple iCloud, and Dropbox.

5. **Share an agenda or some form of organizing document so participants have a sense of the structure of the workshop.**

6. **Establish a method for collecting any materials that the participants produce.** It is typically best to share your feedback on any submitted materials in the same place those materials were submitted.

7. **Carefully consider the most efficient ways for you to communicate with participants and for you to receive and answer participant questions—possibly through a chat function or the use of "raised hand" features that are available in platforms like Zoom.** Make every attempt to stick to a single communication channel to avoid missing participant questions due to having to search in multiple places. Update participants on whether and how you will be able to field questions outside of the formal workshop hours.

8. **Where necessary, adapt the current small group activities and interactive discussions based on the technology resources of the participants.**

9. **Be aware of any accommodations that your participants may need.** For example, some may require closed captioning on videos while others may have challenges with visual acuity. For certain needs, efforts such as working in small groups or pairs, and note-sharing can help. Note that live (synchronous) lectures may require different support services than pre-recorded (asynchronous) lectures.

Tips for delivering content digitally

Workshop Content	Platform for Digital Delivery	General Tip & Instructions
Interactive Polling Questions	Zoom (or equivalent)	Zoom allows for the inclusion of polling questions, the results of which can then be shared with participants. Zoom provides step-by-step support for building and displaying poll questions (https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/203749865-Polling-for-webinars). Similar guidelines can also be found online with a simple web search (e.g., https://www.howtogeek.com/674907/how-to-create-polls-in-zoom-meetings/)
Discussion Questions	Zoom (or equivalent)	Discussion questions can be communicated when you share your slide presentation with audiences, or posed in the "chat" function through Zoom
Small Group Work	Zoom (or equivalent)	The use of "Breakout Rooms" can facilitate small group discussion and group work among subsets of the overall participant group (https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206476313-Managing-Breakout-Rooms)

Resources

Tips were adapted from the following resources:

- https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2020/03/11/practical-advice-instructors-faced-abrupt-move-online-teaching-opinion
- https://elearningindustry.com/deliver-training-online-when-covid-19-sends-everyone-home-cheat-sheet
- https://www.ovpi.uga.edu/teaching-and-learning-continuity/preparing-for-remote-teaching/