Participant's Guide and Interactive Exercises

Emergency Risk Communication Capacity Building Workshop

Through this intensive training workshop, you 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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Acknowledgement

Overview

This training workshop is designed to be conducted over two and a half days by facilitators from staff members of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S. CDC) and/or other partner organizations. 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 COVID-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 crisis and risk communications plans development process enabling participating countries to identify nationally focused 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

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.

Overview Module: Summary

Learning objectives

- Describe the connections between the IHR and risk communication in a public health crisis preparedness plan or response,

- Describe the general or broad characteristics of crisis risk communication and why they are important to public health crisis preparedness and response, and

- Describe specific outcomes that crisis risk communication can help a public health crisis response achieve.

Key insights from overview

This overview presentation sets the stage for the workshop. It provides some broad overviews of key terms that will be present throughout the workshop, outlines the stages of a public health emergency or crisis, and provides background on important topics like the International Health Regulations (IHR)—a binding international legal agreement involving 196 countries across the globe, including all the Member States of WHO. Your insights and input help shape the workshop structure and provides a chance to begin the sharing of views and perspectives which will continue throughout the workshop.

Materials for overview module in appendix

1. CERC: Specific Hazards under CERC
2. International Health Regulations (IHR): Overview
3. WHO Joint Evaluation Tool – Risk Communication Indicators
4. WHO Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) COVID-19
5. Emergency Risk Communication (ERC) Planning Templates

Crisis Risk Communication Essentials

Learning objectives

- Describe the connections between the IHR and risk communication in a public health crisis preparedness plan or response,

- Describe the general or broad characteristics of crisis risk communication and why they are important to public health crisis preparedness and response, and

- Describe specific outcomes that crisis risk communication can help a public health crisis response achieve.

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Materials for Module 1 in appendix

1. Module 1 – Small Group Exercise Worksheet
2. Crisis Risk Communication Plan – Example Template
3. Tips for Managing Uncertainty
4. WHO: Communicating & Managing Uncertainty - COVID-19 Pandemic
5. Determining When Transparency is Needed: 4 Key Questions
6. WHO: Social Stigma Associated with COVID-19

Module 2: Summary

Stakeholders, Partners & Community

Learning objectives

- Describe the importance of coordinating communication among involved organizations and engaging with appropriate communities,

- List common challenges in trying to ensure coordinated communication and community engagement in the emergency risk communication context, and

- Use practical tools to help identify and establish response partnerships and community engagement

Key insights from Module 2

Serious public health events are invariably cross-jurisdictional and so horizontal communication collaboration and coordination is imperative. But, despite a consensus that consistent and complimentary communication is required to achieve our event response goals, inter and intra organizational realities can present significant obstacles. Understanding and anticipating such realities can be the key to moving past them.

Materials for Module 2 in appendix

1. Module 2 – Small Group Exercise Worksheet 1
2. Module 2 – Small Group Exercise Worksheet 2
3. Five Ways to Engage Communities in Public Health Responses
4. Tips for Culturally Sensitive Communication

Module 3: Summary

Persuasion and Behavior Change

Learning objectives

- Explain the basic foundations of persuasion and behavior change communication in the context of emergency crisis and risk communication,

- Explain the key barriers to persuasion and behavior change communication in the context of emergency crisis and risk communication, and

- Use practical tools to persuade audiences about the most effective actions to take in the context of emergency crisis and risk communication.

Key insights from Module 3

Effective crisis risk communication will inevitably involve asking publics to trust particular actors, take on a particular viewpoint or modify an existing behavior. This module provides an evidence-based look at the sciences of persuasion and behavior change. It explores how audiences process risk information, the roles values play in their openness to new information, and tactics that can make them more receptive to new information, among other topics.

Materials for Module 3 in appendix

1. Module 3 – Small Group Exercise Worksheet
2. A Guide for Determining Crisis Risk Communication Objectives

Module 4: Summary

Messaging for Target Audiences

Learning objectives

- Describe the audience considerations and message factors that foster the creation of effective crisis risk communication messages,

- Describe specific ways or steps that can be taken to increase the relevance and impact of crisis risk communication messages and materials on targeted audiences, and

- Use practical tools to develop and draft messages tailored to target audiences that will address their concerns and help them to make informed health decisions.

Key insights from Module 4

Solid and appropriate messaging provides content for a full range of communication activities through different communication channels. Successful messaging builds from and enables the other core emergency risk communication components including transparency, coordination, community engagement and recovery. This module covers the key principles of successful messaging in the context of crisis risk communication.

Materials for Module 4 in appendix

1. Module 4 – Small Group Exercise Worksheet/Message Map Question
2. Nine Principles of Message Mapping
3. Message Map Example – COVID-19

Module 5: Summary

Working with Journalists and News Media

Learning objectives

- List effective ways of working with news media during a public health crisis or emergency,
- List the characteristics of effective media spokespeople for crisis risk communication, and
- Apply the media relations principles and concepts in a way that will enable you to conduct a news media briefing related to a public health recommendation.

Key insights from Module 5

Mass media remains the primary channel through which emergency risk communication is done. News media play a pivotal role in raising awareness of public health threats, but to utilize media in the most effective manner it is necessary to understand their needs and goals. This module explains the role of media, as well as best practices for working with media in a crisis risk communication context.

Materials for Module 5 in appendix

1. Module 5 – Small Group Exercise Worksheet
2. Spokesperson Checklist for Crisis Risk Communication

Module 6: Summary

Understanding and Utilizing Social Media

Learning objectives

- Describe the importance of social media as a tool for effective risk communication,
- List and explain effective methods of working with social media during emergencies, and
- Use techniques for effective social media use to reach target audiences with effective messages.

Key insights from Module 6

While mass media remains the primary channel through which emergency risk communication is done, social media has emerged as a crucial communication option, particularly for targeted communications at specific sub-groups in the population. This module will provide an overview of social media, its users, and what makes it distinct from traditional media. It will also focus on best practices for communicating on social media, including the dangers of misinformation. It concludes with a more focused look at a few popular social media platforms.

Materials for Module 6 in appendix

1. Module 6 – Small Group Exercise Worksheet
2. Social Media Best Practices

Appendix of Materials