



One Health Risk Communication and Community Engagement Seminar for University Students

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Welcome & Introductions



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Purpose



University Public Health Students

Agenda

- Introduction to One Health Approach
- Introduction to RCCE Approach
- Group Work

Pre-test Instructions

- Do not write your name.
- Use your assigned code
- Remember your number, because you will use it for your post-test.
- You will have 15 minutes to complete the test.
- Hand in the test when you are done



Training Objectives

- To familiarize public health students with the One Health concept
- To understand the concept and practices of risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) before, during, and after a disease outbreak.



Let's Get Started

Definition of Risk Communication

- Risk communication is the real-time exchange of information between officials and people who face a threat to their survival, health or economic or social well-being.
- For this seminar, we can think of the threat as a disease outbreak.
- The purpose of risk communication is to ensure that everyone has the information they need to take action to protect their health and interrupt transmission of the disease.



Definition of Risk Communication

RCCE is to support risk communication, community engagement staff and responders working with national health authorities, and other partners to develop, implement and monitor an effective action plan for communicating effectively with the public, engaging with communities, local partners and other stakeholders to help prepare and protect individuals, families and the public's health during early response to a disease outbreak or natural disaster.





Why RCCE?

Why RCCE?

- To empower local community members to participate in and drive forward the design and implementation of the response strategy by building trust and establishing effective dialogue.
- RCCE can increase trust, community dialogue, and social cohesion, reduce rumors and misinformation and minimize stigmatization and violence through a participatory approach.
- A community-led response to an outbreak can increase buy-in and behavior change at the local level and is an incredibly powerful tool to stop the spread of disease and keep people safe.
- Drawing from lessons learned following historic outbreaks globally, there are established best practices and organized a series of steps that support teams to contextualize an adaptive and dynamic approach to RCCE.

Why RCCE?

- To instill and maintain the public's trust in the local & national health system and to convey realistic expectations about the capacity to respond and manage an outbreak
- Risk communication relies on a variety of approaches and strategies: media communications, social media, mass awareness campaigns, house to house mobilization, advocacy, and community engagement.

When is Risk Communicated?

For risk communication to be effective, it should be a continual and evolving process and not simply a crisis management measure.

Before

During

After

Ex. Ebola, COVID 19, Lassa Fever outbreak

Public Health Importance of RCCE

- Risk communication is one essential life-saving action in public health emergencies.
- People have a right to know how to protect their health & have a responsibility to take informed decisions to protect themselves, their loved ones & those around them.
- Effective risk communication not only saves lives and reduces illness, it enables countries and communities to preserve their social, economic and political stability in the face of emergencies.

How Does Risk Communication Work?

- Risk communication only works when there is communication based on trust between those who know (experts), those in charge (authorities) and those affected.
- Explaining honestly what is known and admitting what is uncertain is essential.
- The credibility of those giving advice; their expressions of caring and empathy; and identifying with the audience are factors that make risk communication effective.

Why Is RCCE Work so Important? Lessons from the Ebola Response – DRC 2018*:

- The perception of risk in affected and at-risk populations often differs from that of experts and authorities – effective RCCE can help bridge that gap
- Effective RCCE uses community engagement strategies in the response and develops acceptable yet effective interventions to stop further spread and for individual and group protective measures.
- RCCE is essential for surveillance, case reporting, contact tracing, safe (*and dignified burials,*) caring for the sick
- RCCE helps build trust through two-way communication and increases the probability that health advice is followed. It minimizes rumors and misinformation that undermine the response and may lead to further disease spread

*Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) considerations: Ebola response in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, WHO, 2018

Cross-Cutting Features of One Health Risk Communication

Risk communication should be informed by:

- Listening to community concerns and considering community participation and critical reflection to help build trust.
- Utilizing a variety of community-based networks across existing sectors for an information exchange around One Health behaviors for disease prevention and management.
- Interventions designed in a way that help communities understand the link between human health, animal health, and the health of the environment or eco-systems they share.

Risk Communication Principles

- **Trust:** Communicate in ways that build, maintain or restore trust b/n public and managers
 - **Announcing early and frequently:** To minimize impacts, communicate even with incomplete information than holding information before the public hears it from outsiders
 - **Transparency:** Share timely and complete information of a real or potential risk and its management as well as new developments emerge, trust will be build better
 - **Listening:** Understanding the public perceptions, views and concerns is critical for effective communication and broader emergency management function and supports
 - **Planning:** Sound planning following the principles is essential

Common Barriers that Influence Acceptance and Uptake of Scientific Information

- Low literacy and health literacy rates are barriers to reading written information and understanding health information.
- Ethnic, cultural, or religious minorities that have historically been marginalized may not have the same access to or understanding of health information.
- Groups that speak minority languages may not be able to access information if not in their language.
- Populations that face particular economic challenges that may make it difficult for them to enact key prevention behaviors.
- Religious groups that may have practices that conflict with recommended practices.
- Groups that have different cultural understandings of illness and disease/ explanatory models of illness may not understand your explanations.

Key Principles of Effective Risk Communication

- Transparency
- Consistency
- Frequent communication
- Empathy and authentic expressions of care
- Technical accuracy
- Follow up

Characteristics of Effective Messages

- Accessible
- Actionable
- Accurate and credible
- Timely
- Understood



Characteristics of Effective Messages: Accessible

- Accessible
 - Are they in a commonly understood language?
 - Does the audience have access to the delivery channel – consider access to radio, internet, literacy levels for written content?
 - Is the information appropriate for the delivery channel? For example, complex information may be better suited to interpersonal communication or conversation rather than a short radio spot or poster.

Characteristics of Effective Messages: Actionable

- Actionable

- An actionable message is one that is clear and specific about a behavior that is realistic or doable for the audience. It provides the information people need to help them take action.
- People may need additional information about how to perform an action as well as why they should perform it. This may help decision makers to accept and act on the recommendations of public health officials.
- Research shows that messages that give specific information on an action, benefit, and risk are more likely to motivate behavior change than general messages.
- It is important to emphasize or reinforce priority actions and coordinate with other stakeholders to ensure you can help direct people to existing services and resources that can support them to take action.
- As the outbreak evolves, new or different actions may be required, again emphasizing the need for coordination and frequent communication.

Characteristics of Effective Messages: Accurate and Credible

- Accurate and credible
 - Consistency across a variety of experts.
 - Acknowledging uncertainty and what is unknown.
 - Acknowledging vulnerabilities or challenges people face.
 - Staying up to date and changing messages and materials quickly in response to new information.
 - Coordinating so that trusted messengers are delivering the information.
 - Addressing concerns providing relevant facts beyond just health behaviors.

Characteristics of Effective Messages: Timely

- Timely
 - During health emergencies, this means communicating rapidly what is known and unknown, and providing frequent and reliable updates.
 - For non-urgent health threats, timeliness means engaging audiences to ensure awareness and preparedness.
 - Key to this principle is to determine the best time to engage the public when they are most likely to pay attention.

Characteristics of Effective Messages: Understood

- Understood
 - There is not a one size fits all message.
 - Different populations and audiences have different information needs based on their vulnerabilities and other characteristics such as age, literacy level, religious background, among many others.
 - This again reinforces the need to understand your audience and coordinate with those supporting and working with them to understand their concerns, issues, and needs.

Post-test Instructions

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Thank You!

Questions?



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