Module 1: Foundations of Risk Communication

“The need to communicate clearly was never more compelling than during the recovery from the World Trade Center attacks. People were desperate for information. The information had to be correct, but there were delicate questions of taste and sensitivity as well.”

-Rudolph Giuliani

Module Overview

Risk Communication is an essential component of the comprehensive risk management. When the public feels threatened by a real or potential health emergency, effective communication about the risk/emergency is the most readily available intervention that can be instituted.

Emergencies and disasters evolve in phases i.e. pre-crisis, crisis and post crisis stages. And risk communication should also evolve along the stages of the emergency/disaster.

This module will introduce/ provide a review of the risk management framework, describe the different risk communication interventions in the different phases of emergencies and disasters, as well as discuss the ethical and legal issues related to risk communication.

Module Objectives

At the end of this module the participant should be able to:

1. Use correctly the basic terms and concepts in risk management and risk communication
2. Discuss the risk management framework
3. Describe the different communication functions in disaster management
4. Understand the application of ethical and legal principles related to risk communication

Module Organization

- Session 1: Risk Management Framework
- Session 2: Risk Communication in Different Phases of Emergencies and Disasters
- Session 3: Risk Communication Concepts
- Session 4: Ethical Principles and and Legal Bases

Teaching and Learning Activities

This module will start the application of adult learning principles throughout the course. It will maximize the use of interactive learning exercises, small group discussions and critical thinking in all sessions.
## SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session Title</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>Risk Management Framework</td>
<td>Risk management concepts</td>
<td>Lecture discussion</td>
<td>LCD computer</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7 Fundamental Terms</td>
<td></td>
<td>Items of different materials</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Community Risk Management</td>
<td>Table exercise</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>Risk Communication in Different Phases of Disaster</td>
<td>Cycle of communication in Disasters/Emergencies/Crisis Functions of Risk Communication in different Stages</td>
<td>Lecture discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>Risk Communication Concept</td>
<td>Definitions</td>
<td>Lecture discussion</td>
<td>Use of metacards</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>Ethical Principles and Legal Bases</td>
<td>Decisions Points</td>
<td>Lecture discussion</td>
<td>Country teams' discussion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ethical Principles</td>
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<td>Legal Mandates</td>
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Session 1: Risk management framework

In this session, participants will have an introduction/review of the Risk Management Framework. One important part of the session will tackle common terms and concepts used in risk management. A common understanding of the seven terms is essential in the appreciation of the succeeding modules in risk communication.

SESSION OBJECTIVES

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

1. Discuss the risk management framework.
2. Use correctly the basic terms and concepts in risk management.

Exercise 1: Interactive Session on Hazards, Vulnerabilities, Capacities and Risks

Instructions to participants:
1. Observe closely the procedure that your lecturer/facilitator will demonstrate and be ready to answer the following questions.
2. “What glass will be affected the most if I will shake the table?”
3. Also observe events or changes that are going on as the procedure is being conducted.
Lecture Notes:

Risk Management Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazard</th>
<th>Vulnerability</th>
<th>Readiness</th>
<th>Community Risks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>natural hazards</td>
<td>biological hazards</td>
<td>societal hazards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. probability of occurrence</td>
<td>2. scale: magnitude, intensity</td>
<td>3. area, spread, duration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>earthquakes</td>
<td>floods/storms</td>
<td>famine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diseases of epidemic potential</td>
<td>events/crowds</td>
<td>intoxication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infections</td>
<td>transport accidents</td>
<td>structural failures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pollution</td>
<td>refugees</td>
<td>war</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>terrorism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prevention and Mitigation Programme**

**Vulnerability**
- **indicators**
  - **people**: access to health care, measles vaccination under 5, nutrition under 5, mortality to sanitation, adequate housing, employment/income, female literacy
  - **property**: health infrastructure, vehicles, medical equipment/supplies, public health services, health information system
  - **services**: curative care services, ambulance services, public health services, health information system
  - **livelihoods**: formal, informal, natural/built/urban/rural
  - **environment**: water/soil/air quality, vector habitats, forestry, agriculture

**Community Reduction Programme**

**Readiness**
- **indicators**
  - **laws, policy, guidelines, procedures**
  - **authority, resources, plans**
  - **knowledge, skills, attitudes**
  - **multisectoral, all hazards**
  - **legislation**
  - **national and sectoral policies**
  - **administrative procedures**
  - **response and recovery plans**
  - **preparedness plans**
  - **technical guidelines**
  - **management structure**
  - **institutional arrangements**
  - **information systems**
  - **warning systems**
  - human resources
  - material resources
  - financial resources
  - simulations and training education
  - public information
  - community participation research
  - publications
  - private sector role

**Emergency Preparedness Programme**

**Community Risks**
- **indicators**
  - probability of:
    - death
    - injury (mental and physical)
    - disease (mental and physical)
  - loss of lifelines i.e. (shelter, water, food, energy)
  - population displacements
  - loss of property
  - loss of income
  - secondary hazards
    - breakdown in security
    - damage to infrastructure
    - breakdown in services
    - environmental contamination
  - etc.

**Monitor and evaluate by following hazard specific rates and trends:**
- events/year
- cases and deaths/100 000/year
- cases and deaths/1 000 affected/year
- cases and deaths/event/year

**Public information**

**Public sector role**

**Research**

**Publications**

**Private sector role**

**Legislation**

**Preparedness plans**

**Technical guidelines**

**Management structure**

**Institutional arrangements**

**Information systems**

**Warning systems**

**Human resources**

**Material resources**

**Financial resources**

**Simulations and training education**

**Public information**

**Community participation research**

**Publications**

**Private sector role**

**Monitor and evaluate by following hazard specific rates and trends:**
- events/year
- cases and deaths/100 000/year
- cases and deaths/1 000 affected/year
- cases and deaths/event/year

**Measure:**

- **EXCESS** injuries; disease; disability

**Table 1: Seven Most Important Terms and Concepts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazard</th>
<th>Risks</th>
<th>Vulnerabilities</th>
<th>Capacities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any potential threat to public safety and/or public health</td>
<td>Anticipated consequences of a specific hazard interacting with a specific community (at a specific time)</td>
<td>Factors which increase the risks arising from a specific hazard in a specific community</td>
<td>An assessment of ability to manage to an emergency (a risk modifier) – total capacity is measured as readiness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Emergency**

An actual threat to public safety and/or public health

**Disaster**

Any actual threat to public safety and/or public health where local government and the emergency services are unable meet the immediate needs of the community

**Community**

is people, property, services, livelihoods and environment i.e. the elements exposed to hazards
Risk Communication in Disasters Management Cycle

1. Rehabilitation
2. Risk Assessment
3. Disaster Preparedness
4. Emergency Response
5. Disaster Mitigation
Session 2: Risk communication in different phases of emergencies and disasters

It is important to note that every disaster/emergency occurs at stages and that risk communication needs to evolve together with the specific emergency. There are varying needs of the different audiences to consider in planning and implementing risk communication during these different stages. A fully integrated risk communication in every stage of the emergency/disaster response can improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

SESSION OBJECTIVES

At the end of the session, participants will be able to:

1. Appreciate the integration of risk communication in the stages of emergencies and disasters.
2. Describe the communication functions at every stage of the emergency/disaster

Lecture Notes:

Risk Communication in Disasters Management Cycle
Risk Communication Functions in the Different Stages

- **Pre-crisis**
  - Development of a communication plan
  - Fostering alliances/networking
  - Formative evaluation of the plan

- **Crisis**
  - Implementation of the communication plan
  - Process evaluation/monitoring
  - Impact evaluation of immediate effects
  - Networking/advocacy
  - Revision of plan based on monitoring results

- **Post-crisis**
  - Impact/summative evaluation
  - Documentation of lessons learned
  - Revision of plans
Session 3: Risk communication concepts

In this course, the term risk communication is utilized as the general term to describe all communication efforts in all stages of the emergency/disaster. The session will elicit the participants perceptions of the term risk communication.

SESSION OBJECTIVE

At the end of the session, the participants will be able to discuss the definition of risk communication.

Lecture Notes:

Definitions of Risk Communication

- The purposeful exchange of information about the existence, nature, form, severity or acceptability of health risks between policy makers/health care providers and public/media with the intention of changing behaviours and inducing action to minimise/reduce the hazard (PHEMAP, Phil)
- An ongoing process involving potentially affected “audiences” in identifying hazards, quantifying risks, considering risk management strategies (PHEMAP, Phil)
- The process of bringing together various stakeholders to come to a common understanding about the risks, their acceptability, and actions needed to reduce the risks (PHEMAP)
- Deals with risk elements, whether they are appropriately tolerable, risk consequences (Heath, 1994)
- Exchange of information among interested parties about the nature, magnitude, significance or control of a risk (Covello, 1992)
- Interactive process of exchange of information and opinion among individuals, groups and institutions (National Research Council, 1989)
- Involves sending and receiving of messages “to prevent or lessen the negative outcomes of a crisis and thereby protect the organization, stakeholders and or industry from damage (Coombs, 1999)
- Risk communication provides the essential links between risk analysis, risk management (integrated decision-making), and the public (societal values and needs)
Session 4: Ethical principles and legal bases of risk communication

As in any interventions, the potential benefits and harm of any risk communication must be weighed. Risk communication should be guided by ethical principles and legal bases in any setting.

SESSION OBJECTIVE

At the end of the session, participants will be able to

1. Appreciate the role of ethical principles in the planning and implementation of risk communication
2. Identify legal mandates supporting risk communication in their own setting.

Workshop 1: Identifying Legal Mandates for Risk Communication

Instructions to participants:
1. Form into country groups
2. Identify legal mandates for risk communication at your country level
3. Prepare to share your outputs to the group.

Lecture Notes:

Two universal ethical principles:

- **Beneficence** refers to an action done to benefit others
- **Maleficence** is doing or causing evil

Examples of legal mandates at the national level:

- Constitution
- Laws
- Policies
- Executive Orders
- Ordinances
- Regulations