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CRVS Communication in
Emergency, Conflict Affected, and Fragile Settings

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The **Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems** is a global knowledge hub. We collaborate with organizations and experts to broker access to information and expertise, including global standards, tools, research evidence, and good practice. Housed at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), we are funded by Global Affairs Canada and IDRC. Established in 2015 as a global public good under the framework of the Global Financing Facility, the Centre of Excellence is part of the Government of Canada's larger investment in improving reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health and nutrition (RMNCAH-N) outcomes.

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Executive summary

In situations of emergency, conflict, or fragility, barriers to timely civil registration of vital events are exacerbated. This causes disturbances in the provision of civil registration services, increases requests for new information, disrupts the usual ways of communication, decreases trust, and increases rumours, misinformation, and disinformation. It also widens inequalities, including gender biases. Rapid, correct, and trusted communication about civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) services becomes crucial to maintaining the demand, acceptance, and use of services. Further, it helps minimize social and economic costs at a time when documents help people access key social and public services and support their basic human rights.

In a crisis situation, communication also bears the increased responsibility of avoiding additional damage and risks. In such situations, it is crucial to have a nationally led and coordinated communication on CRVS. This communication must

◗ be informed by evidence about the changes in community and population needs, issues, and perceptions;

◗ nurture trust;

◗ be open and transparent;

◗ be based on social listening and feedback mechanisms;

◗ be community-centred and participatory;

◗ dispel misinformation and disinformation inherent to any crisis situation; and

◗ be inclusive of all vulnerable and marginalized groups.

CRVS communication preparedness is essential to minimizing the impact of the disruption. This is achieved by putting in place communication recourses and alliances ready to be deployed, and enabling CRVS authorities to rapidly and efficiently recognize and manage any communication risks to civil registration. Setting up feedback mechanisms can help CRVS systems build trust with communities, be more responsive to needs, ensure greater accountability to the population, and ultimately contribute to better quality of services.

An effective feedback mechanism can prevent problems from escalating. By collecting and answering feedback, CRVS systems can build a more successful and sustainable relationship with the population. Social listening is the process of monitoring and analyzing conversations and collecting feedback online and offline to inform strategic activities. This becomes an essential component in developing communication and engagement strategies and managing rumours. Communication efforts launched in emergency, conflict affected, and fragile settings need to go beyond media, advocacy, and public awareness to address the communication needs of affected families and communities.

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Introduction

All governments are responsible for ensuring access to and issuance of civil documentation for all persons. This is especially challenging in emergency, conflict affected, and fragile settings. To the extent possible and according to their capacity, governments make accommodations to the new situations; they amend procedures and take specific measures to sustain the coverage and supply of civil registration services. In these instances, correct and timely communication with the population becomes crucial.

Even in peaceful times, civil registration faces many challenges on the demand side, especially in low-income countries. These might include a chronic lack of knowledge and awareness of the need and importance of registration of vital events, lack of interest in registration, little trust in service providers, disempowerment and discrimination of marginalized groups, gender inequities, and a multitude of social norms and customs. These factors sometimes create insurmountable barriers for the population, with additional hurdles for women.

Increasing civil registration services coverage and access will not result in significant improvements in terms of timely and effective registration if

◗ families and communities do not perceive registration as necessary and don't know its benefits;

◗ people lack the ability or the self-efficacy to actually register vital events;

◗ people are not supported by their peers and reference people;

◗ there are social norms that will prevent them from registering; and

◗ opportunities are not available for communities to influence the delivery of civil registration services and build trust between service users and providers.

Increased attention to modern social and behaviour change approaches and investments in social and behaviour change, also called communication for development by the United Nations, is needed to achieve sustainable results in the acceptance, demand, and use of CRVS services.

*"**Social and Behaviour Change Communication** is a process of interactively communicating with individuals, institutions, communities, and societies as part of an overall programme of information dissemination, motivation, problem solving, and planning" (Centre for Social and Behaviour Change Communication 2021).*

***Communication for Development (C4D)** is a systematic, planned, and evidence-based approach to promote positive and measurable behavioural and social change. It engages communities and decision-makers at the local, national, and regional levels in dialogue toward promoting, developing, and implementing policies and programs that enhance the quality of life for all. It uses dialogue and empowerment as tools to engage populations, especially those marginalized or most at risk. Finally, C4D aims to strengthen the capacity of communities to identify their own development needs, assess the options and take action, and assess the impact of their actions in order to address remaining gaps. (UNICEF)*

As recommended by the newly revised Handbook on civil registration, vital statistics and identity management systems: Communication for development, targeting civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) practitioners in low- and middle-income countries (UNSD 2019), a dedicated communication for development program for national CRVS systems would increase the rates of civil registration among the public in general, and in particular, among population groups and in areas where it is known that vital events are greatly underreported. The program would aim to motivate people to promptly register such events and accept civil registration as a regular part of their lives. This will help to overcome the social barriers, and engage and empower populations, communities, CRVS authorities, civil society, religious, and formal and informal leaders to actively promote civil registration.

When a country or some of its regions are affected by emergency (Civil Contingencies Secretariat 2004),[1] conflict (World Bank 2021),[2] or are in a situation of fragility (Relief International 2021),[3] rapid, correct, and trustworthy communication about CRVS services becomes crucial to maintaining the demand, acceptance, and use of services and minimizing social and economic costs. Among frequent emergencies, we can cite pandemics, droughts, earthquakes, extreme heat waves, tsunamis, floods, hurricanes, and terrorist attacks.

In a situation of emergency or fragility, barriers to timely civil registration of vital events are further exacerbated. Crisis situations can bring about the following:

◗ Changes or disruptions in usual ways of providing civil registration services, requiring new information to be provided to the population. For example, in an epidemic or in an area of active conflict, people might not be able to visit the civil registry office, or the working hours and procedures might be changed.

◗ Disruptions in usual ways of communication, which require finding new approaches, channels, and sources. For example, local radio stations might be destroyed and gatherings prohibited.

◗ A drop in trust levels, compelling specific efforts to increase the credibility of CRVS services. Especially in conflict affected and fragile settings, mistrust of the authorities can reflect on all government services, or civil registration can be seen as a recruitment tool.

◗ New information sources, which need to be understood and valorized. Some of these sources can appear due to the rise of new power centres and influencers. Others appear due to the resilience of the population looking for alternative solutions.

◗ Rumours, misinformation, and disinformation inherent to crises can damage the image and the public's trust in services, but also can create dangers to the lives and security of the population. Thus, they require timely and efficient management.

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1   A situation that poses an immediate threat to a population's life, health, property, or environment. See: UK Government Advice on Definition of an Emergency. Civil Contingencies Secretariat. 2004.

2   Countries affected by violent conflict, identified based on a threshold number of conflict-related deaths relative to the population. This category includes two sub-categories based on the intensity of violence: countries in high-intensity conflict and countries in medium-intensity conflict. See: Revised Classification of Fragility and Conflict Situations for World Bank Group Engagement.

3   Fragile settings are defined by the overlapping, interconnected challenges people living there face. Fragility is multidimensional. It's a consequence of multiple challenges converging and each bringing its own set of risks. When these risks accumulate, there can be a collapse of services. See: Relief International.

▶ The widening of inequalities can increase stigma and discrimination which can further distance vulnerable groups from CRVS services, thus requiring that specific actions be taken.

▶ Increases in gender biases make access to registration services even more difficult for women; this leaves them without the important protection of identity documents.

▶ Sometimes, a lack of physical access to population groups, or even movement restrictions, require reinventing communications approaches and adapting to the situation.

The importance of legal identity documents during times of disaster cannot be underestimated. These documents help people access key social and public services and support basic human rights. Among other things, timely registration of vital events and possessing identity documents in an emergency could help

▶ avoid risks of child separation from family;

▶ protect from sexual exploitation, trafficking, recruitment into armed groups, and hazardous work;

▶ access relief supplies;

▶ access governmental and private entitlements and/or facilities, such as health, education, financial services (bank account, credit), voting, obtaining legal employment, land allocation schemes, or property restitution mechanisms;

▶ allow freedom of movement; and

▶ track the major events of an individual's life (marriage, death) to claim housing, land, property inheritance, and other rights.

Many communication efforts launched in emergencies tend to focus on media advocacy and public information; these are designed for public awareness and fundraising. While this is critical, it is only one of many components that should be integrated into emergency communication planning. A holistic communication strategy and plan for humanitarian settings must also address the communication needs of affected families through interactive behaviour change components, social mobilization, and adequate feedback mechanisms.

Urgency of action, short timelines, and a lack of strong systems due to disruption in times of crisis make implementing CRVS communication plans particularly challenging during emergencies.

In a crisis situation, communication also bears an increased responsibility for protecting the credibility and image of services, ensuring their demand and use, and avoiding additional damage and risks. Therefore, communication in times of crisis should incorporate the following principles (UNICEF 2020a):

▶ **Nationally led and coordinated by government**, supported by agencies, and civil society;

▶ **Informed by data** about the changes in community or population needs, issues, perceptions, and communication channels;

▶ **Designed to nurture trust**, open and transparent with feedback mechanisms in place as a main element;

▶ **Community-centered and participatory**, working with local knowledge and capacities, enabling community-led actions, and supporting personal coping mechanisms;

▶ **Dispelling misinformation and disinformation**, which are inherent to any crisis situation; and

▶ **Inclusive** of all vulnerable and marginalized groups.

There are several phases of CRVS communication in emergency situations that will require specific actions:

◗ **Preparedness:** Ideally, this will start before any emergency occurs, with contingency communication planning that is regularly updated. Should it not be done regularly, it is imperative to prepare when it becomes evident that an emergency might occur, or when an area is accumulating multiple risks and might enter a state of fragility. During this phase, it is also important to foster alliances and partnerships and develop consensus and coordination for emergency situations.

◗ **Communication during the initial phase:** It is important to establish credibility at the outset, provide simple communication on changes in procedures and access to services, and recommend new actions or practices.

◗ **Maintenance:** As the emergency continues, CRVS services and communication offices can add actions to start capturing and analyzing feedback to improve services, address rumours, engage communities, and provide more background information to the population.

◗ **Communication during the recovery and post-crisis:** It is important to explain the transition to post-crisis services and the functioning of these services. It is also essential to capture the lessons learned and use them for improved emergency preparedness.

Coordinating CRVS communication in emergency situations

In emergency and fragile settings, CRVS communication offices will have new functions for coordinating preparedness, conducting rapid situation assessments, reviewing and approving communication in emergency plans, mobilizing additional resources and coordinating their utilization, implementing and coordinating feedback mechanisms, and managing rumours (UNSD 2019). They will also have the task of coordinating a post-crisis communication evaluation.

In the same way, multisectoral coordination on CRVS communication will have additional responsibilities (UNSD 2019). These include setting shared goals and objectives for the communication in emergency program, endorsing and sharing the responsibility for implementing the national communication in emergency plan, coordinating the distribution of tasks among partners, sharing budgets, organizing and coordinating joint field visits, and monitoring actions.

CRVS communication preparedness

When an emergency occurs, the need to communicate is immediate. Therefore, contingency CRVS communication planning is an important component of the preparedness program. A contingency plan is created to deal with an emergency, or with something that might possibly happen and cause problems in the future (Cambridge Dictionary).

A contingency CRVS communication plan outlines the steps to be taken right away when an incident occurs and lays out a strategy to follow should the event continue for days, weeks, or months. It lists the communication team and their different roles, services to be prioritized, and key lines of communication that stakeholders need to do before, during, and after an emergency to ensure the demand for civil registration is sustained. CRVS communication plans for emergency, conflict affected, and fragile settings clarify the approaches to be adopted, what and how will be communicated, what media to use, what people and resources can be counted on, and who will most need the information. It also includes planning for feedback and accountability to affected populations, and managing rumours and risks.

Contingency communication plans are living documents and should be updated on yearly basis, or when there is a major change in the operating environment. This allows an organization to respond quickly to an emerging crisis, based on coordinated and validated plans, having all the resources identified or already in place.

It is crucial that plans for CRVS communication and information management are consistent with disaster management plans carried out by national authorities.

Communication preparedness includes the set of analysis, actions, and capacity building arrangements to be undertaken from the national management to the local registrars' levels to be ready to respond effectively to an eventual crisis. Disaster preparedness is defined by the United Nations as involving "forecasting and taking precautionary measures before an imminent threat when warnings are possible" (Kent 1994).

The objectives of CRVS communication preparedness are to

▶ anticipate and minimize the impact of the disruption of the timely civil registration of birth, marriage, divorce, and death;

▶ put in place communication recourses and alliances, ready to be deployed rapidly and to contain disruption to the use of services in a timely fashion; and

▶ manage communication risks by enabling CRVS authorities to rapidly and efficiently recognize and manage any communication risks for civil registration.

Communications preparedness actions include:

▶ **Conducting a rapid assessment or other research** to define risks for disrupted civil registration, identify at-risk populations and areas, and recognize information and communication needs related to CRVS services. Communication planning requires a good understanding of the social context, including social and cultural norms and behavioural drivers, the environment, and the information needs of the population and CRVS staff.

In humanitarian contexts, there is typically an urgent need to implement plans to save lives, making it difficult to allocate the time needed for standard research processes. It is recommended that governments and their development partners use the tools and resources available to communication for development (C4D) practitioners to support rapid assessments, research, and monitoring that can inform program decisions quickly. Increasingly, digital technologies are also enabling rapid data collection, including online and SMS tools (Berman et al. 2017).

Social Science in Humanitarian Action: A Communication for Development Platform (SSHAP 2021), launched in 2017, establishes networks of social scientists with regional and subject expertise to rapidly provide insight, analysis, and advice. The platform is tailored to serve the different development agencies according to their needs and demanded services; it is also available in accessible forms to ensure better design and implementation of the social and communication dimensions of emergency responses. It includes summaries and links to key publications on communication interventions for humanitarian response.

Rapid assessment is most effective when integrated with risk analysis and risk management; it should be incorporated into preparedness planning and in all aspects of a disaster response. Trust is key to successful communication in an emergency. Certain community groups might trust different people. Rapid assessment can help identify the most trusted sources and channels of communication.

▹ **Mapping partners and potential partners in at-risk areas** and defining roles and responsibilities for each. These include sectors and organizations that have reach, platforms, or networks in potentially affected or fragile areas. It is important to remember that some partners in emergency or fragile settings can be different from those in a peaceful development environment.

▹ **Mapping communication networks with reach at the community level.** These include community animators, local leaders, women's and youth associations, community engagement platforms, and networks.

▹ **Mapping media**, including online media in at-risk areas. When a crisis strikes, the media perform a social function by providing prompt, first-hand coverage of the situation. Having an alliance with media outlets and professionals makes it easier to engage them in times of disasters and emergencies. By establishing and developing relationships with the media before an emergency or disaster strikes, you will also know what their information demands are and how they prefer to obtain it.

▹ **Standby partnership agreements**, for use when the emergency unfolds and as per the contingency plan; these are for interpersonal communication, media communication, youth and community engagement, capacity building, community engagement, and feedback mechanisms.

▹ **Establishing and validating procedures for information and materials**. This includes validating and distributing information, and approving and sharing communication materials with partners. Information management becomes essential during an emergency; the procedures must be consistent with national emergency management plans.

▹ **Putting in place procedures for monitoring** information related to risk areas and populations. In addition to the information provided by field staff, the office could subscribe to internet services that offer searches and daily reports of news items published about the emergency via e-mail.

▹ **Building capacity of specific groups on communication in emergency**, rumours management, and related skills. Among these can be spokespersons for CRVS services, focal points in different regions, social mobilizers, representatives of community networks, media professionals, and others.

▹ **Establishing ready for activation protocols** for different partners and actors, in case of emergency.

Objectives of a CRVS communication in an emergency plan

As with other communication for development plans, a CRVS communication plan for emergency, conflict affected, or fragile settings will have objectives for social and behavioural change, social mobilization, and advocacy formulated around the following actions:

◗ Provide the population (including women and young people) access to information on changes in the provision of CRVS services that is

- correct and sound;

- developed in accordance with national laws and regulations;

- adapted (age, level of education, language); and

- distributed through a variety of channels (offline and online, mobile platforms, peers, and trusted reference persons in the community).

◗ Support communities to engage and own effective actions for improved civil registration of vital events and demonstrate positive change towards universal registration.

◗ Engage the main gatekeepers of social and cultural norms as allies of civil registration services, positively influencing and encouraging the population's registration practices.

◗ Create positive public opinion and social support for civil registration, and mitigate potential stigma and discrimination; this helps ensure that populations – especially marginalized groups, young people, and women – feel encouraged and supported by their peers and society in general.

In addition, the communication plan will require extra objectives for social listening, feedback mechanisms, and rumour management. This involves ensuring active social listening and providing the population with access to feedback mechanisms on the quality of services and needs. Government, services, and partners consider and use this information to design and adjust the provision of civil registration services, and effectively identify and manage rumours and disinformation.

A framework for communication in emergency, conflict affected, and fragile settings is presented in Annex 1. It is a template tool to offer guidance on how the expected results, activities, and indicators can be organized by communication for development strategic area of intervention. These areas include coordination; preparedness; behaviour change communication; social change and community engagement; social mobilization; advocacy; feedback mechanisms and rumours management; research, monitoring, and evaluation; and capacity building. The framework provides examples of activities which can be selected and adapted based on local needs, as well as a set of indicators, both at the behavioural outcomes level and at the communication process level.

Community engagement

Community engagement is a crucial component of a CRVS communication for development program. It is a foundational action for working with traditional, community, civil society, government, and opinion groups and leaders. It also expands collective or group roles in addressing the issues that affect their lives. Community engagement empowers social groups and networks, builds upon local strengths and capacities, and improves local participation, ownership, adaptation, and communication. Through community engagement principles and strategies, all stakeholders gain access to processes for assessing, analyzing, planning, leading, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating actions, programs, and policies that will promote survival, development, protection, and participation (UNICEF 2020b).

Engaged by CRVS systems, communities could become meaningful holders of information and knowledge about civil registration services. As such, they can

◗ sustain two-way communication;

◗ claim their rights to timely civil registration; and

◗ take leadership roles in the deliberations, decision-making, design, implementation, and measurement of CRVS communication actions.

Community engagement is crucial for eliminating discrimination and inequalities by gender, ability, age, faith, race, ability, and ethnicity; and changing social perceptions and norms. Communities can put mechanisms in place to register concerns about CRVS services and provide continuous feedback on their quality, availability, accessibility, and acceptability. They can also enrich social research and make it pertinent by engaging in research design and implementation, and probing conclusions and recommendations.

Different organizations and stakeholders had their own interpretation of community engagement, and often failed to meaningfully engage and empower communities. As such, the Minimum Quality Standards and Indicators for Community Engagement (UNICEF 2019), developed in 2019 through an inter-agency consultation process led by UNICEF, engaged a large number of experts and practitioners from around the world, and marked an important step towards establishing an enabling environment for robust community engagement practice (Table 1).

The document also provides standards to support implementation, coordination and integration, and resource mobilization for community engagement.

Table 1: Six core community engagement standards.

Core community engagement standards	
Participation	Communities assess their own needs and participate in the analysis, planning, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of governance, development, and humanitarian initiatives. Community views and needs are given due weight in all aspects of policy, planning, research, and practice.
Empowerment and ownership	Communities have opportunities to own and feel empowered by community engagement processes. Empowerment is a process and an outcome of community engagement and participatory practice.
Inclusion	Community members and groups that are under-represented, disadvantaged, vulnerable, and marginalized are identified, supported, and ensured a role and voice in all aspects of community engagement. Safety considerations should be examined in implementing this standard.
Two-way communication	Communities give and receive clear, appropriate, and accurate information through two-way communication pathways on a regular and predictable basis to ensure access to information and participation.
Adaptability and localization	Community engagement approaches are developed based on local contexts. They should be flexible and responsive to local populations' needs, conditions, and concerns.
Building on local capacity	Community engagement should build on the existing skills and resources of communities and the local groups and organizations that serve them.

Source: Minimum Quality Standards and Indicators for Community Engagement. UNICEF, 2020.

Feedback

Feedback is information shared by communities and populations with the organizations or institutions that supply CRVS services. It can include questions about services, suggestions for improvement, complaints, and expectations. Feedback can also provide insights into rumours and misconceptions circulating at community levels. It can be positive, negative, or neutral. Each is equally important to improve CRVS services.

Setting up an offline feedback mechanism is one of the key pillars of emergency communications that can help CRVS systems build trust with communities, be more responsive to needs, become more accountable to the population, and ultimately contribute to better quality of services. An effective feedback mechanism can prevent problems from escalating. By collecting and answering feedback, CRVS systems can build a more successful and sustainable relationship with the population.

A feedback mechanism is not just a way of addressing complaints. It has multiple objectives, such as

- building trust;
- generating information for planning;
- enhancing community engagement;
- improving communication; and
- ensuring accountability to affected populations.

For this, the institution or multi-partner group implementing a feedback mechanism needs a recording system to capture complaints, clear delegation and procedures for staff to deal with the feedback, and a clear mechanism for providing remedies and action. Thus, a feedback mechanism has three main objectives:

▶ **Enabling complaints and feedback**, which includes all arrangements for enabling people to make complaints and provide their feedback. These arrangements or methods should be people oriented, visible, recognizable, and accessible for everybody.

▶ **Responding to complaints and feedback**. All complaints and feedback should be responded to promptly and handled objectively, fairly, and confidentially. Response actions will be conducted and there will be a system to analyze and review response actions.

▶ **Ensuring accountability and learning**. Complaints and feedback are used to stimulate CRVS systems improvement.

Proposed questions for the population when collecting feedback on CRVS services

▶ *What are you worried about in relation to registration or CRVS services?*

▶ *How are CRVS services responding to your needs?*

▶ *Do you have unanswered questions about CRVS?*

▶ *What information is not clear to you (misinformation, concerns, and rumours)?*

▶ *Why are you not using the services?*

▶ *What should CRVS systems do to adjust to your needs?*

The following list outlines the main recommended steps to follow in setting up a feedback mechanism (Fluck 2019):

▶ Secure organizational commitment;

▶ Consult the population or community on preferred approach;

▶ Design feedback mechanism guidelines and agree on roles and responsibilities;

▶ Set up the feedback mechanism and train staff;

▶ Inform the community on how to provide feedback or complaints and what to expect;

▶ Acknowledge receipt of complaints or feedback;

▶ Enter the information in a database;

▶ Investigate and resolve formally or informally;

▶ Respond;

▶ Report to the community on the action taken; and

▶ Record the response, make changes, and share learning.

Some possible channels for receiving or collecting feedback include:

◗ Community meetings;

◗ Meetings with community leaders;

◗ Face-to face interactions between representatives of community networks and community-based organizations, CRVS frontline workers, registrars, and others;

◗ Partners who are trusted by communities and at-risk groups;

◗ Interactive community radio programs and call-in shows;

◗ Social media;

◗ SMS platforms;

◗ Hotlines;

◗ Dedicated phone or text lines;

◗ Meetings of CRVS representatives with the population; and

◗ Question desks.

Analysis of the feedback is most often done in a simple database format (Excel), with an integrated dashboard. Data is catalogued as rumour, question, complaint, etc. It is also organized by thematic category (birth registration, deaths, and other), and highlights patterns by region, age, gender, and more.

Responding to the feedback can be done

◗ to the community (via poster, community meeting, bulletin board, community radio, or at a community meeting);

◗ in specific cases – directly to the person complaining or providing feedback;

◗ publicly – in media or public meetings; or

◗ through action – by immediately making obvious changes to address the feedback.

In any case, answers should be actionable and concrete. If there are questions you cannot answer, you must be transparent and inform the community that you could not resolve the feedback, though you have tried. The feedback database should be shared with all concerned services and stakeholders, so it is coordinated and harmonized (Fluck 2019).

Social listening

Social listening is the process of monitoring and analyzing online and offline conversations to inform strategic activities.

With the explosion of social media, social listening emerged as an important component of social communication. At its origins, social listening was the process of monitoring digital conversations and interactions for marketing and business purposes. However, it evolved in development work, becoming closely intertwined with feedback mechanisms and combining online and offline social listening.

In emergency, conflict, and fragile situations, social listening becomes an essential component of communication and engagement strategies.

Example: COVID social listening in Eastern and Southern Africa

(Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, and Zambia)

The Risk Communication and Community Engagement Interagency Working Group on COVID-19 has set in place a social listening mechanism. It codes, analyzes, and triangulates qualitative socio-behavioural data to inform the response to the pandemic and ensure that COVID-19 social and behaviour change communication and programming are aligned with concerns and needs expressed by the communities.

Social data are gathered through a variety of channels: interactive radio, hotlines, short message service (SMS), face-to-face communication, community meetings, social media, and chat bots.

Social listening identifies questions, queries, concerns, complaints, and suggestions shared by communities. It also helps identify rumours, misinformation, and disinformation.

Data from social listening is triangulated with other sources of insights such as primary research data.

Source: UNICEF 2021

Rumours

A rumour is unverified information that spreads rapidly through a group or population, either true, false, or a bit of both. Rumours are a natural response to uncertain or threatening times (Bugge 2017).
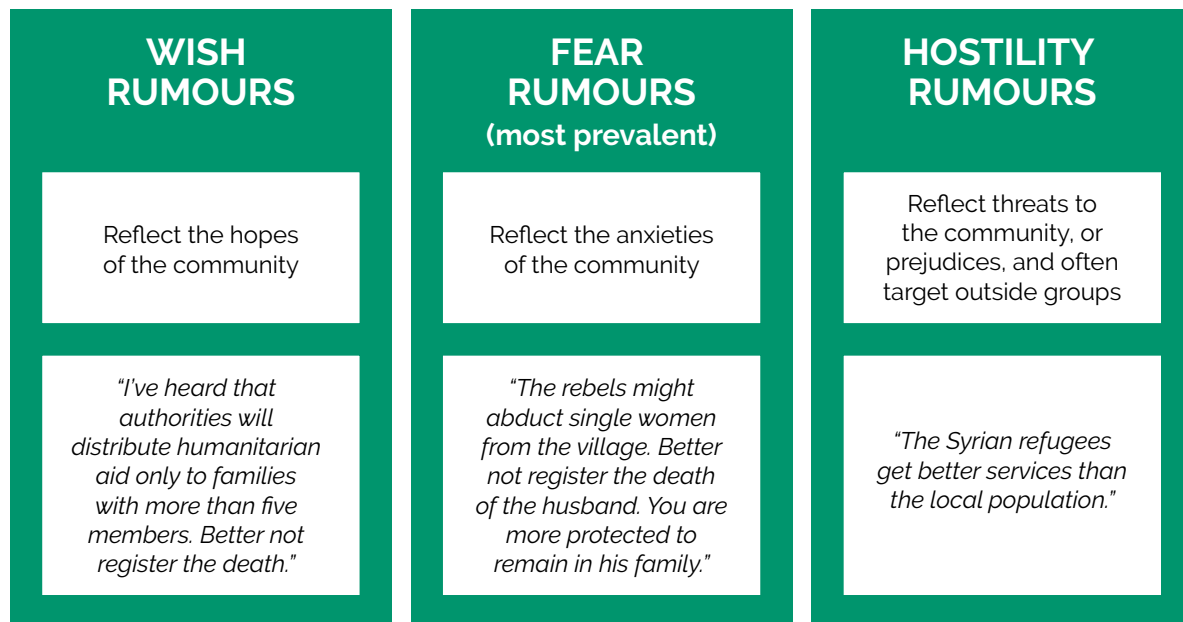
Different people will have different motivations for spreading rumours – from sharing useful or entertaining information or trying to feel connected to issues affecting them, all the way to developing relationships by using information as a currency, misleading or deceiving for economic or political reasons. With the exception of disinformation, people generally share rumours because they believe the rumour or parts of the rumour.

Under pressure or in a crisis, when social networks and usual sources of information are disturbed, people may change the ways they assess the accuracy of information and lose the capacity for critical thinking.

In emergency or fragile settings, rumours cannot be ignored as they can

◗ provide honest feedback on your service delivery or undermine it;

◗ threaten lives and create suffering for people and service providers;

◗ help better understand people in affected communities, thus putting in place a more localized, people-centered response;

◗ serve as an early warning of violence or risky behaviour so early action can be taken; and

◗ provide an opportunity to improve community engagement, which in turn leads to better participation – and to delivering responses that are truly localized (Bugge 2017).

States and development or humanitarian agencies have a responsibility to listen to communities, including rumours, as a fundamental part of the Core Humanitarian Standard and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Commitments on Accountability to Affected Populations. Meaningful participation, enshrined in the 'Grand Bargain' at the World Humanitarian Summit, starts with organizations better listening and improving their understanding of affected communities (Bugge 2017).

Figure 1: Three types of rumours.[4]

WISH RUMOURS	FEAR RUMOURS (most prevalent)	HOSTILITY RUMOURS
Reflect the hopes of the community	Reflect the anxieties of the community	Reflect threats to the community, or prejudices, and often target outside groups
"I've heard that authorities will distribute humanitarian aid only to families with more than five members. Better not register the death."	*"The rebels might abduct single women from the village. Better not register the death of the husband. You are more protected to remain in his family."*	*"The Syrian refugees get better services than the local population."*

Managing rumours is done in three steps: listening, verifying, and engaging.

Listening

Listening is more than just hearing what is said. People may be reluctant to share rumours they have heard with people they do not trust. To effectively listen to rumours, organizations need to build on existing and trusted relationships at the community level (civil society, local media, community-based groups, teachers, and others), to ensure listening is done in the language the community is most comfortable using, and to have open and unstructured conversations with the community.

Listening can be done using a multitude of channels, which are not different from those for collecting feedback. However, identifying rumours is not as simple as asking people about any rumours they have heard. People may believe a rumour to be true and therefore not even consider it a rumour, or people may not trust you as someone to discuss this with. It might be necessary to train the people who are listening to rumours and to make sure they know what kind of information you are looking for and why, so they can explain it to the community.

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4   Based on G. W. Allport and L. J. Postman, Department of Psychology, Harvard University, Cambridge: The Basic Psychology of Rumor. romolocapuano.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/AllportPostmanThe-BasicRumorOfPsychology.pdf

A platform such as a toll-free hotline, website, social media page, or email address where the public can write or call in with rumours for clarification or reporting, might be very useful.

Figure 2: Example of a rumour log.

What the rumour is	Source / Channel	Date	Location	Potential consequences	Risk rating	Verification status	Engagement activities	Monitoring outcome	Responsible

Questions to assess the potential consequences of a rumour:

◗ Could it cause harm?

◗ Could it stop people from accessing services?

◗ Could it cause conflict?

◗ Could it result in risky behaviour?

◗ Could it put certain groups at risk?

◗ Could it put your staff, your partners, or the community at risk?

◗ Could it pose a significant reputational risk?

Verifying

Verifying involves finding out the facts behind the rumour by

◗ identifying reliable information sources: written sources such as laws, rules, policies, factsheets; or people with first-hand experience or in-depth knowledge of the subject matter;

◗ checking the facts with sources;

◗ triangulating these facts by checking with more than one source and ensuring these are reliable and independent of each other;

◗ unpacking why it came into being in the first place; or

◗ understanding the issues and concerns highlighted by the rumour.

Understanding what triggered a rumour, if possible, gives the opportunity to address the root causes. For example, it may be something that has not been done or explained properly to the population about CRVS services and procedures that needs to be addressed. If a rumour is being spread by a group of influential individuals, specific advocacy work will need to be done directly with this group.

It is important to be careful not to spread a rumour when verifying it.

Engaging

Engaging with the population will start by accurately identifying the key audiences who need to be influenced.

A new narrative has to be developed to replace the rumour, using the language the audience is most comfortable with, citing sources, and using quotes or testimonials from people the audience trusts or identifies with. The new narrative must be compelling enough to replace the original rumour.

Because rumours are often emotionally charged or rooted, denying, confirming, or ignoring a rumour — even by simply providing the facts behind the rumour – is unlikely to change what people believe.

Content should be pretested with the key audience for comprehension, acceptability, and appeal to ensure it will not cause more confusion or misunderstanding, which could lead to more rumours.

The new narrative should be supported by government emergency authorities and shared by all partners in your coordinating network. It is important to continuously check if the new narrative is being received, understood, and believed.

There are several effective ways to create messages that support your new narrative (Bugge 2017):

◗ **Keep it simple:** the facts are more likely to be remembered;

◗ **Use visuals:** images and graphics can be effective in dislodging a rumour;

◗ **Express it as a positive:** positive messages are more likely to be recalled;

◗ **Tailor the message:** to your target groups in the community;

◗ **Be timely:** a rumour can travel fast, and your counter-message should be delivered as quickly as possible;

◗ **Include actionable information:** what can people do differently and where they can get additional information? If the message is to encourage people to take action of some kind, check that it is indeed actionable for this group, otherwise new frustrations could emerge; and

◗ **Ensure it is trusted:** attribute the information to a source trusted by the community.

The new narrative can be delivered by

◗ using communication channels that are already trusted by the population or the specific groups targeted. Remember that these may change in an emergency;

◗ developing new channels when needed;

◗ using more than one channel to reinforce the message and reach different groups;

◗ using one or a series of messages depending on the complexity of the rumour and context; and

◗ wherever possible, prioritizing two-way channels to have feedback from the community.

Don't

◗ *Ignore rumours;*

◗ *Reinforce rumours;*

◗ *Spread non-confirmed information using social media or conversations; and*

◗ *Leave questions unanswered.*

If you don't know, be honest but assure them that you will find the information and get back to the community.

Specifics of communication in emergencies and fragile settings

Communication in emergency, conflict affected, or fragile settings will need to be adapted based on evidence from the assessment and other research to better respond to the challenges. Based on the lessons learned from past and current emergencies, including the COVID-19 global pandemic, a few recommendations are presented below.

Engaging communities in emergencies should be adapted to new realities. It is important to learn how communities are already adapting locally with their own mechanisms and to support them. CRVS services can learn and adapt accordingly. "Ask them what means of communication they prefer, what available technologies they are comfortable with, what languages they prefer, what engagement they can ensure and what role they can and want to play. Communities are resilient and will always find solutions, so work with them to determine how to continue supporting the services that are needed, while keeping everyone safe" (OXFAM 2020).

When the usual communication channels are disrupted, cascade information on CRVS procedures and practices via phone or internet to local community networks or social networks, including faith and care group leaders. Engage through community networks and local organizations, including groups for women, youth, refugees, internally displaced persons, and minorities, by providing them with information, resources, and motivation to act. The motivation does not have to be monetary; it can be a recognition of merit by the community or the state, an offer of capacity building, or exchanges with other communities. These networks and associations are best placed to inform and encourage specific population groups to register their vital events and express their needs in relation to CRVS services.

Partnering with the departments leading the local or community development agenda, and agencies and NGOs supporting local development, so CRVS services can benefit from community engagement coordination mechanisms and approaches that are central to communication in conflict, emergency (including epidemics), and fragile settings. These departments can play a role in improving demand for and use of civil registration services. They may also have the best mechanisms to register concerns and provide continuous feedback on the quality, availability, accessibility, and acceptability of services in crisis and fragile settings. They can prevent related problems and deal directly with those that arise, rather than requiring that external actors step in, which is not always possible in crisis situations. Communities are also best placed to identify and support under-represented, disadvantaged, vulnerable, and marginalized populations to effectively use CRVS services.

Continuous engagement with local religious leaders is important, particularly where determinants to registration are subject to cultural or social norms; these leaders have a privileged position to engage with families in any condition. Local religious leaders may be addressed through their involvement in local development structures or round tables, workshops, and other community events; and through hierarchical structures where those exist. Engaging them in such activities may encourage them to include the topic in weekly prayers or become active participants in promoting timely civil registration.

Engaging local formal and informal opinion leaders, elders, and respected personalities might include an elected village leader, traditional or tribal chief, community midwife, teacher, or nurse, for example, who can change public opinion in favour of timely registration of birth, marriage, and death and offer support in this respect to community members. This is particularly important in remote areas where illiteracy and poor communication have long been deterrents to effective registration coverage and where social norms or traditional practices are challenging the timely registration of vital events.

Effective counselling and communication by registrars and other CRVS staff are essential in emergency situations. Consider providing registrars with communication tools and content to motivate proactive, efficient, and encouraging communication with families.

The COVID-19 pandemic showed the opportunity for supporting virtual community discussion groups led by formal or informal leaders, which can be attached to existing committees or groups, including women's groups, groups for people with disabilities, care groups, and others. The CRVS office can budget for and provide mobile phones and cellular data and information on CRVS services, or partner with organizations that already support such groups.[5]

The work to engage media networks and media professionals has to start and be consolidated long before the emergency occurs, through a permanent dialogue. During the crisis, media professionals and outlets serve as critical partners to facilitate the transmission of messages that can inform public behaviour. The media have a big role in giving space to experts and officials to mitigate rumours and potential stigma. Raising media awareness and strengthening relationships with media professionals can be done through briefings and dedicated events. Organizing field visits of journalists to put a human face on registration services is an important way of working with media professionals and reaching the public.

In an emergency, interactive local radio programs and call-in shows are effective ways to establish community dialogue and feedback loops and provide answers to common questions using trusted experts and influencers.[6]

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5   Drawn from Tips for Engaging Communities during COVID-19 in Low-Resource Settings, Remotely and In-Person by the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN), IFRC, UNICEF, and the World Health Organization (WHO), 2020. **thecompassforsbc.org/sites/default/files/strengthening_tools/ WHO_CETipsCovid19_0.pdf.**

6   Ibid.

Collecting and disseminating testimonials of ordinary people with whom the audience can identify is a powerful way of influencing behaviours and should be promoted and supported in local and national media.

Consider using social media and work with moderators to stimulate dialogue, correct misconceptions, and track rumours. Posting videos and multimedia communication helps attract more attention. "Social media offers the ability to share bite-sized information and can increase awareness or garner support for a single issue. Having strong visuals is key. Sharing lengthy information, engaging on multiple topics, or conducting activities that require a feedback loop can be challenging tasks on social media. But these platforms can be used to build trust through regular contact or keep ongoing attention on a topic" (Fedorowicz et al. 2020).

Hotlines, or green lines, can serve critical purposes in an emergency. They establish a link with communities to collect feedback, understand people's concerns, respond to inquiries, and provide advice and information on how CRVS services work. Provide national- and local-level contact details for hotlines through community leaders and traditional mass and social media. It is very important to establish protocols and train operators to respond to calls accordingly.[7]

SMS platforms have proven to be very efficient in such situations for communication, feedback, and alerts, especially in areas where the population has limited access to the internet. Almost everyone has a mobile phone, and SMS works well with the most basic model of cell phone. A short code allows community members to send information to a central hub and register to receive regular updates.[8] Consider partnering with agencies or departments that have put in place such platforms (often health ministries or UN agencies using open-source SMS software such as RapidPro, Frontline, RapidSMS, U-Report, or other).

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7   Ibid.
8   Ibid.

Conclusion

Implementing CRVS communication interventions in emergency, conflict affected, or fragile settings poses special challenges:

◗ Rapidly conveying information to affected populations;

◗ Dealing with disrupted communication channels;

◗ Increasing social listening and implementing feedback mechanisms;

◗ Managing rumours and misinformation; and

◗ Other issues that might need to be addressed.

Engaging with populations for the timely provision of accurate information by credible sources becomes essential.

There is also the need to support coping behaviours for individuals and families. In addition, it's important to reinforce resilience in displaced families and communities using participatory processes that complement information dissemination.

Recent lessons on communication in emergencies, such as the Ebola epidemic and COVID-19 pandemic, have provided valuable lessons and resources. They have also advanced practices in the area of emergency communication coordination, social research, planning, and implementation.

National CRVS programs need to be proactive in ensuring that communication offices, resources, and systems are in place before an emergency occurs. Communication channels, networks, partners, materials, and messages must be agreed on and made available to ensure rapid communication to sustain CRVS-related practices.

Therefore, there is a crucial need for contingency planning, consistent with disaster management plans carried out by national authorities, to be able to respond quickly to an emerging crisis, based on coordinated and validated plans, and having all resources identified or already in place.

Communication efforts launched in emergency, conflict affected, and fragile settings need to go beyond media, advocacy, and public awareness to address the communication needs of affected families. This can be achieved through dialogue-based behaviour change, social mobilization, community engagement, social listening, adequate community feedback mechanisms, and rumour management based on solid expertise in specific areas.

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Annex 1: Framework for CRVS communication in emergency, conflict affected, and fragile settings

Strategic areas and expected results	Types of activities (examples)	Example indicators	Recommended data collection methods	Partners
		Outcome indicators of behaviour change: • % of persons (disaggregated by education, wealth, age, sex, ethnic/religious/minority background, and disability status) who are aware of the registration procedures • % of persons who take the necessary steps (or dedicate the necessary resources) to register all vital events in the family • % of respondents who can explain the registration procedure • % of respondents who can cite one benefit of timely registration of vital events • % of respondents who consider important to complete timely civil registration of birth, marriage, divorce, and death • % of respondents that declare being willing to complete timely registration of vital events • % of respondents who have shared the messages on civil registration with members of their family, peers **Outcome indicators of social change, community engagement and social mobilisation:** • % of respondents who feel that civil registration progrmming outcomes are consistent with their community expectations • % of respondents who believe that community engagement related to civil registration contributed to increasing their voice, decision-making, and/or capacity • % of respondents that declare being supported and encouraged by their employers and trade unions to complete the timely registration of vital events • % of respondents who declare that there is a positive change in the society towards universal civil registration • % of school graduates who are aware of the civil registration benefits and procedures **Outcome indicators of feedback mechanisms and rumours management:** • # of respondents who feel that they were able to get the information they needed through feedback mechanisms • # of respondents who feel that they were able to get the help they needed through feedback mechanisms • # communities that report having been successfully able to advocate for needs and resources related to civil registration using feedback mechanisms	• Before/after population surveys • Community report cards/checklist	

1. CRVS communication coordination

Strategic areas and expected results	Types of activities (examples)	Example indicators	Recommended data collection methods	Partners
Communication coordination mechanisms in place, with full-fledged CRVS communication strategies and plans for conflict, emergencies, or fragile settings, budgeted and shared by all partners, providing technical guidance and ensuring M&E.	1.1 Support for the creation and functioning of the CRVS communication office	**Process indicators:** • % of financial and human resources in the CRVS program that is available for communication activities	• Annual report	
	1.2 Support for multisectoral coordination on CRVS communication	**Process indicators:** • % of communications coordination partners (ministries, agencies, and NGOs) who regularly engage in the coordination of CRVS communication	• Minutes of the meetings	• Agencies responsible for CRVS, identity management, and population register • Ministries or departments of health, education, justice, social services and social development, women's affairs, planning and finance, interior, and culture • Representatives of civil society organizations • Representatives of religious communities • Representatives of media • United Nations agencies supporting CRVS and identity management systems improvement programs • Representatives of youth and of the general population, and/or deprived and underserved groups
	1.3 Development and validation of the CRVS communication strategy for conflict, emergency, or fragile settings, including epidemics	**Process indicators:** • % of coordination partners satisfied with the strategy development process • Average quality rating of the communication strategy	• Quality checklist	

2. Communication preparedness

Strategic areas and expected results	Types of activities (examples)	Example indicators	Recommended data collection methods	Partners
The disruption of timely civil registration of birth, marriage, divorce, and death in conflicts, emergencies, and fragile settings (including epidemics) is anticipated, prevented, prepared for, and responded to in a timely manner, resulting in the maintainance of demand for and utilization of timely civil registration by families, with minimized impact of the crisis on CRVS services. The CRVS autorities are enabled to recognize and manage the communication risks, and to act rapidly and efficiently. The communication resources are in place to be deployed rapidly and to contain the disruption in a timely fashion.	2.1 Conducting rapid situation assesment to define the risks for disrupted civil registration, most at-risk populations and areas, including a rapid assessment of information and communication needs on CRVS services	**Process indicators:** • Rapid situation assesment report meets at least 80% of the quality standards	• Quality checklist for rapid assesment reports	• Research institutions, universities
	2.2 Mapping of partners, including potential partners, in at-risk areas, defining roles and responsibilities	**Process indicators:** • % of at-risk areas where key experts agree that the mapping is comprehensive	• Quality checklist	
	2.3 Mapping of agents of change (community animators, local leaders, women's and youth associations, community engagement platforms) and networks in at-risk areas	**Process indicators:** • % of at-risk areas where key experts agree that the mapping is comprehensive	• Quality checklist	
	2.4 Preparing standby partnership agreements for interpersonal communication, media communication, youth and community engagement, capacity building, etc.	**Process indicators:** • # of emergency communication plan activities for which standby partnership agreements have been signed by main stakeholders	• Activity report	
	2.5 Mapping the pertinent media in at-risk areas, including online media	**Process indicators:** • % of at-risk areas for which key experts agree that media mapping is comprehensive	• Quality checklist	
	2.6 Establishing and validating procedures for distribution of information, approving and sharing communication materials with partners	**Process indicators:** • % procedures for for which key experts and stakeholders agree that they are in strong alignment with the communication plan	• Quality checklist	
	2.7 Putting in place procedures for monitoring of information related to risk areas and populations	**Process indicators:** • Mechanism for monitoring of information related to civil registration in emergency, in at-risk areas, and with populations is validated and functional		

Strategic areas and expected results	Types of activities (examples)	Example indicators	Recommended data collection methods	Partners
3. Behaviour change communication for adoption of civil registration-related practices				
		Output indicators: • # of people reached with accurate, up-to-date information about the importance of timely registration, procedures, and services through online sources, social media, and SMS/communication tools/media/registrars/IPC by members of local networks • % of people who trust online sources, social media, and SMS/communication tools/media/registrars/IPC by members of local networks • # of people who feel that they can access online information that they need through online sources, social media, and SMS/communication tools/media/registrars/IPC by members of local networks • % of relevant mass and social media that regularly post evidence-based pro-registration arguments to counter anti-registration sentiments	• Before and after population survey • Media monitoring	
Information, messages, advice, and counselling on civil registration procedures and existing services are sound, developed in accordance with national laws and regulations, adapted (age, level of education, language, etc.), and culturally appropriate, revised continuously, agreed, and validated by all partners.	3.1 Development and production of culturally appropriate communication content and materials	**Process indicators:** • % of communication tools and guidance documents meeting quality standards, according to key experts	• Quality checklist	

3. Behaviour change communication for adoption of civil registration–related practices (cont.)

Strategic areas and expected results	Types of activities (examples)	Example indicators	Recommended data collection methods	Partners
Population (including women and young people) has access to correct information from a variety of online sources and receives information and reminders on mobile devices.	3.2 Online and SMS communication and resources	**Process indicators:** • # of posts on social media and SMS distributed • # of press releases, media statements • # of persons reached through social media and SMS messaging	• Social media metrics • Media monitoring	• Telecommunication companies, social media outlets, and groups
The favourable and supportive to civil registration public opinion is created; population receives the information needed for decision-making related to personal risks through a diversity of media; rumours and potential stigma are mitigated by experts, officials, and media professionals.	3.3 Communication via local and mass media and engagement of media networks and media professionals	**Process indicators:** • # of TV spots broadcasted • # of radio spots broadcasted • # of publications in printed and electronic media • Estimated # of persons reached through TV, radio, and print media	• Activity reports • Media monitoring • Media reach metrics	• Public and private media, journalists' associations and networks, community radio associations
Families receive timely and actionable information on civil registration services from their extended family, peers, and trusted reference persons in the community, so they know how to access and use CRVS services, they are listened to and have their questions answered, and their concerns and misinterpretations addressed.	3.4 Engaging trusted community networks and local organizations, including women's and youth groups, in interpersonal communication on CRVS	**Process indicators:** • # of people reached through interpersonal communication activities by local networks and associations	• Activity reports • Media monitoring • Media reach metrics	
When in contact with CRVS services, families are counselled and encouraged to perform timely registration of all vital events.	3.5 Effective counselling and communication by registrars and other CRVS staff	**Process indicators:** • % of registrars equipped with counselling and communication tools • % of people who engage with registrars, reporting that they have received at least one key message on CRVS	• Activity report • Exit survey	

4. Social change communication and community engagement

Strategic areas and expected results	Types of activities (examples)	Example indicators	Recommended data collection methods	Partners
		Output indicators: • # of community-based activities initiated and conducted by the community in favour of timely registration of vital events • % of communities that have identified and achieved their own goals for participation in improving timely civil registration • # of people living in communities that have participated in civil registration-related planning, management, assessment, and monitoring as part of the local development agendas • % of people reached with IPC by community communicators, including from young people and women's networks	• Activity report	
Communities are engaged and own effective actions for improved civil registration of vital facts in conflict, emergency, and fragile settings and demonstrate positive change towards universal registration.	4.1 Ensuring and supporting the engagement of local communities by local development and engagement structures	**Process indicators:** • # of community members trained on IPC and community participation/engagement on civil registration issues • # of activities organized with communities • % of population who participated in a public gathering in support of registration • % of communities that received an opportunity to dialogue with a registrar in the past 3 months • % of women participating in a community meeting about civil registration who felt that their opinion contributed to a solution to the problem • % of young people participating in a community meeting about civil registration who felt that their opinion contributed to a solution to the problem • # of people reached with civil registration messages through religious leaders • # of people reached with civil registration messages through local opinion leaders, elders, and respected personalities	• Activity report • Population survey	• Ministry or agency in charge of local development, associations of municipalities, or communities

4. Social change communication and community engagement (cont.)

Strategic areas and expected results	Types of activities (examples)	Example indicators	Recommended data collection methods	Partners
Population, and especially marginalized groups, young people, and women feel encouraged and supported by their peers.	4.2 Mobilizing trusted community networks and local organizations, including women's and youth groups and minority groups	**Process indicators:** • % of communities where an opportunity was available for women to be trained on IPC and community engagement on civil registration issues • # of women and young people trained on IPC and community engagement on civil registration issues • # of planned activities with women and youth groups that are succesfully organized and well attended	• Activity report	• Community development and engagement structures
The main gatekeepers of social norms and customs become allies of the civil registration services and positively influence the population's registration practices.	4.3 Engaging local religious leaders in promoting and supporting timely civil registration	**Process indicators:** • % of communities in which at least 1 religious leader received training or participated in an advocacy meeting on CRVS communication	• Activity report	• Theologic academies, religious authorities
The population is encouraged to use civil registration services by their respected reference people in the community and by the the local public narrative.	4.4 Engaging local opinion leaders, elders, and respected personalities	**Process indicators:** • % of communities in which at least 2 opinion leaders - elders or other respected personalities - engaged in actions to promote/support timely civil registration	• Activity report	• Associations of traditional leaders

Strategic areas and expected results	Types of activities (examples)	Example indicators	Recommended data collection methods	Partners
5. Social mobilization				
		Output indicators: • % of parents who were in contact with a maternity ward/health service who declare having received communication on civil registration • % of families who have been in contact with legal services, coroners, and funeral services and who declare having received communication on civil registration • % of school children/adult learners declaring having learned about civil registration in school or in adult learning initiatives • # of people engaged by reacting to, commenting, and online sharing of information from the institutional website	• Exit survey • Website metrics	
There is an extended social support for the population to demand and use civil registration services for the timely registration of birth, marriage, divorce, and death, with a focus on empowering the most marginalized groups and communities and catalyzing positive change	5.1 Mobilizing trade unions, patronate, and other influential private sector and professional groups in support of civil registration	**Process indicators:** • % of trade unions, patronate, other influential private sector and professional groups in support of civil registration that were approached for collaboration and have initiated actions in support of CRVS"	• Activity report	• Federation of trade unions, patronate, private sector, and professional associations
	5.2 Mobilizing NGOs and civil society alliances, including youth and women's networks and organizations at the national level in the promotion of timely and complete civil registration	**Process indicators:** • % of activities from the CRVS communication plan implemented in collaboration with NGOs • # of NGOs regularly involved in the coordination of CRVS communication	• Activity report • Meeting minutes	• NGOs and civil society alliances, youth and women networks, and organizations at national level

Strategic areas and expected results	Types of activities (examples)	Example indicators	Recommended data collection methods	Partners
5. Social mobilization (cont.)				
	5.3 Supporting communication on civil registration through or in collaboration with medical societies and practitioners, coroners, funeral services, the courts, law societies, and legal education officials on the promotion of civil registration	**Process indicators:** • # of medical and legal societies and groups, identified in the mapping, that initiated or hosted events related to CRVS	• Activity report	• Medical societies, professional association of coroners, funeral services, law societies, law universities/ departments
	5.4 Supporting delivery of communication and education on the value of and procedures for civil registration through education platforms	**Process indicators:** • % of schools/adult learning programs that introduced a module on CRVS in their curricula	• Activity report	• Ministry of education
	5.6. Developing and sustaining an official webpage on communication for civil registration	**Process indicator:** • # of people reached through the institutional website	• Website metrics	

Strategic areas and expected results	Types of activities (examples)	Example indicators	Recommended data collection methods	Partners
6. Advocacy				
		Output indicators: • # of opinion leaders making public statements/speeches/testimonies in support of timely registration of all vital events • Proportion of high-level religious leaders making prayers/public statements/speeches/testimonies in support of timely registration of all vital events • # of sectors supporting actions conducive to increased timely civil registration	• Activity report	
Political, religious, and opinion leaders advocate publicly and take action in support of timely civil registration and CRVS systems.	6.1 Identifying and engaging well known personalities, VIPs, first lady, etc. as advocates and champions of CRVS	**Process indicators:** • # of opinion leaders reached through advocacy meetings	• Activity report	• First lady
Public narrative and discourse on civil registration is positively shaped by well-known trusted leaders.	6.2 Advocating with high-level religious leaders	**Process indicators:** • # of high-level religious leaders reached through advocacy meetings	• Activity report	• Theological academies
CRVS communication in an emergency is supported by financial partners.	6.3 Advocating with donors for increased support and resources for communication on CRVS in emergencies	**Process indicators:** • Amount of funds mobilized for communication	• Annual report	
	6.4 Advocating with other sectors for increased support to conveying communication on timely registration of birth, marriage, divorce and death	**Process indicators:** • % of concerned sectors supporting actions conducive to increased timely civil registration	• Activity report	• Ministries or departments of health, education, justice, social services and social development, women's affairs, planning and finance, interior, and culture

7. Feedback mechanisms, accountability to affected populations, and management of rumours

Strategic areas and expected results	Types of activities (examples)	Example indicators	Recommended data collection methods	Partners
Population has access to feedback mechanisms on the quality of services, provides opinions, and expresses needs that are considered and used by the providers (government, services, partners) to design and adjust the provision of services; the population receives feedback on actions taken in consequence.	7.1 Putting in place effective feedback/ compliance mechanisms	**Output indicators:** • # of people reached through two-way communication • # of people sharing their concerns and asking questions/clarifications for available registration services to address their needs through established feedback mechanisms • # of feedback mechanisms used • # of decisions made/actions taken/concerns resolved using community feedback • # of policies or procedures changed resulting from community feedback • % of population in project areas who feel they can submit feedback and complain to the service provider and get a timely response • % of people in project areas who believe that community concerns, beliefs, and structures have been prioritized **Process indicators:** • % of communities in project area in which at least 1 community focal point has been trained to facilitate two-way communication • % of communities where community feedback on CRVS is collected • % of relevant stakeholders/partner organizations who are involved in the analysis of feedback on a regular basis • % of community feedback on which an action was taken	• Activity report • Population survey	
Rumours effectively identified and managed.	7.2 Monitoring and management of rumours	**Process indicators:** • # of communicators/mobilizers/media professionals trained in the management of rumours • % of identified rumours on which an action was taken (new narrative distributed, statement made, etc.)	• Activity report Rumours log	

Strategic areas and expected results	Types of activities (examples)	Example indicators	Recommended data collection methods	Partners
8. Research, monitoring, and evaluation				
	8.1 Baseline study, including formative research and quantitative survey of knowledge, attitudes, perceptions, and practices	**Process indicators:** • Formative research informing the communication planning meets quality standards for research	• Quality assessment checklist	• Research institutions, universities
	8.2 Monitoring of media and social media	**Process indicators:** • Media monitoring reports meet the established standards for frequency and coverage	• Quality checklist	
	8.3 Monitoring, including implementation monitoring and behaviours monitoring	**Process indicators:** • % of achieved results as per the communication plan % of progress on behavioural indicators	• Activity report • Before/after population survey	
	8.4 Research on the impact/effectiveness of the strategies (ongoing activity)	**Process indicators:** • # of documented impact results		
	8.5 Evaluation, including implementation of evaluation and behaviour impact evaluation	**Process indicators:** • Evaluation meets 80% of established quality standards	• Evaluation quality standards checklist	
9. Capacity building				
All actors involved in the COVID-19 response, including media and influencers, are equiped with correct and up-to-date information and skills to promote protective behaviours, eliminate stigma, and effectively manage rumours.	9.1 Developing training modules for different groups	**Process indicators:** • # of training modules developed • % of developed training modules rated as good by the key experts	• Activity report • Quality checklist	
	9.2 Organization of training and briefings for different groups of participants (community and religious leaders, frontline CRVS staff, media, community radio, registrars, greenline operators, etc.)	**Process indicators:** • # of people trained, by category, having met the post-evaluation standards	• Post-training evaluation report	