

STEP-BY STEP PLANNING GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING A RABIES COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

STEP 1: Assess the Science

Describe the problem to be addressed, the strength of the scientific evidence and the extent of scientific consensus behind the communication activity.

What is the rabies situation in my country? _____

Who is most affected by rabies in my area? _____

Why are people being exposed to rabies? What behaviours are putting people at risk?

What are the behavioral, cultural, demographic, or physical factors may affect how people react to your rabies prevention or control messages? _____

STEP 2: Define the purpose of the communication

What is the purpose of your outreach? Define the goal(s) and objective(s).

The specific purpose of this activity is to: _____

Goal: _____

Objective #1: _____

Objective #2: _____

Objective #3: _____

STEP 3: Identify your target audiences(s)

A. Primary Audience

From Step 1, who did you identify as being most affected by rabies in your area? (This will be your primary audience.) _____

B. Secondary Audience

Who can influence your primary audience? _____

C: Tertiary Audience

What other a groups play a role in rabies prevention and control? _____

STEP 4: Develop and test the messages

The message concept is the main idea to convey to the audience and should be condensed to one or two sentences. Exact wording for the final message needs to be developed and pretested with content experts and members of the intended audience.

Main Message:

Supporting Messages:

Pretesting of message with technical experts (specify who and when):

Pretesting of message wording and delivery formats with persons from intended audience(s) (specify who and when):

STEP 5: Choose media and channels for distribution of the message

Which communication channels are most utilized by my target audience? _____

Which communication channels are most trusted by my target audience? (For example, most children trust their teachers, making school-based educational initiatives helpful in reaching children.) _____

Which communication channels can we afford within our budget? _____

Can we combine and send messages through several communication channels? _____

STEP 6: Determine the best timing for delivering the message

What time of year are most rabies cases occurring? _____

Are there other events during that time period that would conflict with our messages? Yes / No (specify): _____

Are there other events during that time period that would compliment our messages? Yes / No (specify): _____

Could rabies messages be promoted during the same time period as other public health messages? Yes / No (specify): _____

What other activities are happening in your area around World Rabies Day? _____

Could your messages be promoted during World Rabies Day? Yes / No (specify): _____

Can we make a news “hook” that would attract attention during this time period? Yes / No (specify): _____

Can we sustain our messages after the initial launch? Yes / No (specify): _____

How can we promote our messages year round? Yes / No (specify): _____

STEP 7: Implementing the communication plan

How should we launch or announce the campaign? _____

Should we have an event associated with the launch? Yes / No (specify): _____

How should we obtain media coverage? _____

What partners need to be included in the launch? _____

How can we find out whether we are reaching our target audience? _____

How can we maintain media and partner interest in the campaign long-term? Yes / No (specify): _____

Implementation Checklist	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Materials completed, ready for distribution
<input type="checkbox"/>	Partners prepared, ready for launch
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health providers prepared and able to answer questions about the program
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spokespersons prepared
<input type="checkbox"/>	Media notified
<input type="checkbox"/>	Invitations out for launch event
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ready to track program progress

STEP 8: Evaluate the effort and its impact

To conduct a **process evaluation**, you can use the following metrics. Modify to coincide with your objectives identified in Step #2.

To assess **awareness** (objective #1), ask yourself the following:

- How many areas/localities participated in rabies prevention activities?
- How many events were conducted?
- How many people participated in these events?
- How many partners participated in events or promoting rabies prevention messages?
- How many government agencies participated in events or promoting rabies prevention messages?
- How many international agencies collaborated with your locality (e.g., OIE, WHO, FAO)?
- How many people visited your website?
- How long did people stay on the website?
- How many people downloaded materials from your website?
- How many people asked questions through phone lines or email inquiries?
- How many educational materials were distributed?
- How many people were reached by your listservs or distribution?
- How many people were reached by your partners listservs or distribution?
- How many media articles or news reports covered your topic?
- How many people were reached by the media?
- How many partners are willing to work with you again next year?

To assess the amount of **resources mobilized** (objective #2), ask yourself the following:

- How many dogs were vaccinated?
- How many other animals were vaccinated?
- How do the number of vaccinations this year compare to last year?
- How many animals were spayed/neutered?
- How many funds were you able to raise for your outreach?
- What was the total value of corporate and foundation support received?
- What was the total value of in-kind support you received from all of the partners?
- How many funds were you able to raise for future efforts?

To assess the **educational outreach** (objective #3), ask yourself the following:

- How many people were educated by your outreach?
- How many educational materials were distributed by your organization?
- How many educational materials were distributed by your partners?
- How many schools were able to take part in rabies education?
- How many students were reached through the educational outreach?
- How many areas/localities were able to hold educational efforts?

To conduct an **outcome evaluation**, look for opportunities to conduct either a written survey or hold focus groups with the target audience to assess their **knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors** around rabies prevention and control in your location.

How will you conduct an evaluation of your program? _____

Who will be responsible for compiling a written report? _____

Who will receive a copy of the written evaluation report? _____

SUMMARY TABLE:

Fill in the summary table below to help you in pulling together several of the steps above. This table can help you in your overall communication plan.

Summary of Communication Outreach

<i>Target Audience</i>	<i>1/2° Messages</i>	<i>Channels for distribution</i>	<i>Timeline of release</i>
Primary Audience:	•	•	•
Secondary Audience:	•	•	
Tertiary Audience:	•	•	•

References

Brownson R.C. and Nelson D. E. (2002). *Communicating Public Health Information Effectively: A Guide for Practitioners*. Washington, DC: American Public Health Association.

National Cancer Institute (2002). *Making Health Communication Programs Work*. Washington D.C., U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.