



RISK COMMUNICATION SAVES LIVES & LIVELIHOODS

Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework



Pan American
Health
Organization



World Health
Organization
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE Americas

RISK COMMUNICATION

fighting disease & protecting economies



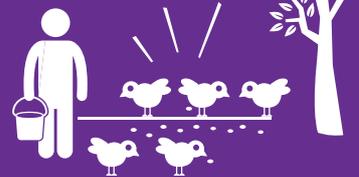
Stops spread of illness & saves lives



Prevents travel & trade restrictions



Protects livestock & livelihoods



Protects economic development



Strong emergency risk communication: stopping disease spread, saving lives & livelihoods

In a pandemic or other public health emergency, authorities must engage individuals, communities and businesses, listen and respond to concerns, and support everyone by working together to prevent disease spread. This dynamic exchange of life-saving information is called **risk communication**.

Risk communication prevents spread of disease, saves lives and protects national and local economies. Without effective risk communication, people do not have the information they need to protect themselves, their families and their livelihoods.

When people know how to protect themselves, they can help stop the spread of disease, limiting the economic and social impact of an outbreak or emergency.

A priority for every country

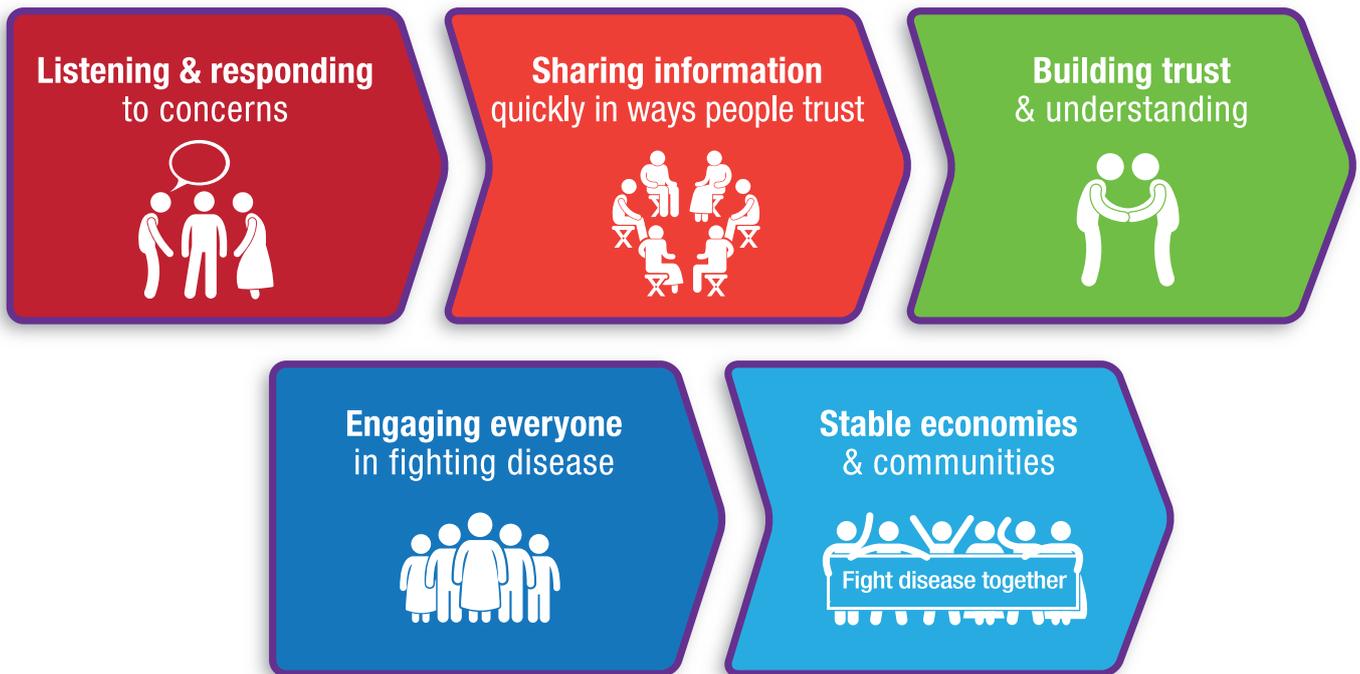
Emergency risk communication is recognized as an essential component of preparedness and response public health emergencies in many international agreements and WHO frameworks such as:

- International Health Regulations (2005)
- Pandemic Influenza Risk Management, WHO Interim Guidance (2013)
- Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework (2011)

WHO's risk communication is a core element of the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework (PIP) which brings together governments, industry, other stakeholders and WHO to implement a global approach to pandemic influenza preparedness and response. Its key goal includes improving and strengthening the sharing of influenza viruses with human pandemic potential.

Risk communication is a dynamic process

of sharing & responding to information
about a public health threat.





Strong risk communication is built before an emergency

Effective risk communication *during* a health emergency requires planning and investment *before* the emergency occurs.

Many countries have learned that it is better to have a strong system in place that can respond to any health emergency, rather than to prepare for each emergency individually. Taking this 'all-hazards approach', WHO supports countries by strengthening their ability to prepare for and respond to any public health hazard, including pandemic influenza.

Prior to a pandemic or other public health emergency, countries should have risk communication systems in place to:

- deploy trained risk communication professionals to support the response from the very beginning until the end of the emergency;
- reach out to and engage local communities and respond to their concerns;
- rapidly produce and share communications through channels that people use and trust;
- test the effectiveness and appropriateness of public health messaging, and adjust advice as needed;
- test risk communication capacity, including through simulation exercises; and
- coordinate communications between government, partners and affected sectors such as public health, agriculture, livestock, transport, trade, tourism, points of entry and education as well as with local industry and civil society.

PAHO/WHO leadership & support

Under the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework, PAHO/WHO helps countries strengthen risk communication skills and systems, working closely with governments and partners. This helps countries prepare for future public health emergencies such as pandemic influenza.



PAHO/WHO can provide advice and resources to strengthen risk communication in all countries. For priority countries, additional support includes:

- needs analysis to identify strengths, barriers and gaps;
- priority-setting workshops to agree guiding principles and develop an action plan;
- technical support for policy development and institutional planning;
- landscape mapping to understand local and national media audience and reach;
- training and skills development;
- executive coaching for senior decision-makers;
- media workshops for journalists and editors; and
- simulation and tabletop exercises to test national emergency risk communication capacity.

POOR COMMUNICATION

devastates communities & local industry



*Leads to illness,
fear & death*



*Hurts
the economy*



Destroys jobs



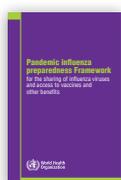
*Incites civil
unrest*

More information



About WHO's risk communication capacity-building activities

<http://www.who.int/risk-communication/en/>



About the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (PIP) Framework

www.who.int/influenza/pip



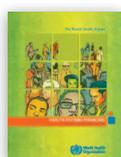
About the International Health Regulations

www.who.int/topics/international_health_regulations



About WHO's Emergency Response Framework

<http://www.who.int/hac/about/erf/en>



About health systems strengthening

www.who.int/topics/health_systems



For further information about PAHO/WHO's risk communication work, contact us at:
pahoriskcomm@paho.org



Pan American Health Organization



World Health Organization

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE **Americas**

Pan American Health Organization
525 Twenty-third Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.