WHO Media Engagement Strategies for Vaccination

Lessons learnt from Acute Public Health Events
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Objectives

When outbreaks happen …
Objectives

*To promote vaccination, effective and efficient communications are required to:*

- Create favorable operational conditions
- Increase public understanding, compliance
- Facilitate coordination to reduce transaction costs

Trust

Easily Lost

Hard to rebuild
Principles

* WHO Principles of Outbreak Communications

- Transparency
- First Announcement
- Listening
- Planning

Trust
Challenges

The principles are challenged in reality due to:

- Uncertainties
- Urgency
- Different perspectives on news values
- Rival theories
- Trust in no authority

Why Still Engage Media?

- Powerful Message Dissemination Instrument
- Key but not the only component of integrated communications approach
Practices

Case Study 1: Pandemic A(H1N1)

Extensive coverage ≠ People are “Listening”

• 250,000 stories in Week One
• But, after H5N1 “scare,” H1N1 was “disappointingly” mild
• People felt misled by WHO/public health authorities
• Many made their own risk assessment and decided not to get vaccinated
Case Study 2: polio vaccination in Nigeria, Pakistan, India

Wild Poliovirus, Previous 6 Months

*05 Dec 2012 - 04 Jun 2013
- Wild virus type 1
- Endemic country
- Country with WPV case in previous 6 months

1Excludes vaccine-derived polioviruses and viruses detected from environmental surveillance.

Data in WHO HQ as of 04 June 2013
Practices

Case Study 3: Fukushima
Strategies

- Know How to “Live Without”
- Long-term, Educational, Accountable, interactive
- Fast, Accurate, Transparent

√ Build broader alliance
√ Engage other influencers
√ Create your own channels

Integrated Communications
Prospects

Future Scenario

- Attention increases on vaccination
- Better public understanding of vax

Innovation / Reform

- More effective research, planning: long-term communications (e.g., work now on the science and public health benefits of vax)
- Embrace social media
- Integrated approaches
- Doctor/scientific/other respected community spokespersons
GOAL

Influence people's personal risk assessments/risk benefit calculations concerning vaccination
Thank You!