

- Discuss **how best to get information out** to affected communities, and to **ensure communities can communicate easily** with your agency. This may involve working with local media stations, community leaders, volunteer networks and other trusted sources of information. [Note, check beforehand who runs the station and if a partnership with them could threaten or contradict humanitarian principles.]
- If a **communication coordination mechanism** exists (e.g. working group), ensure you share your communication data and activities through regular meetings and other info-sharing methods.
- Investigate the possibility of being part of a **common service project** or a **communication coordination mechanism** with other actors to ensure effective coordination of communication activities and to avoid duplication or contradiction of messages, which can lead to confusion. Examples include a telephone hotline, inter-agency community consultations, or collaborating to sponsor a radio or TV programme for affected communities.

Phase 3 (3-4 weeks)

Phase 3 is often when more detailed assessments are carried out, usually by individual organisations or by multiple agencies or clusters. This enables humanitarian responders to design effective programmes based on the needs identified and, in sudden onset disasters, to move from response to recovery.

As with other sectors, approaches to two-way communication will evolve along with changes in the situation on the ground. In some humanitarian contexts, the communication infrastructure can be restored relatively quickly; in other contexts, such as conflict situations, it may take much longer. It is therefore essential to continuously check what is working and trusted, and what is not.

Funds and capacity permitting, media development agencies such as BBC Media Action, Fondation Hirondelle, International Media Support and Internews can conduct a more comprehensive information and communication needs assessments.

The media development agencies who are part of the CDAC Network have agreed to use common assessment tools which are available on the CDAC Network website. These tools, or questions from them, can be used by any humanitarian agency.

For information on these tools or to find out more about conducting in depth communications assessments, visit the CDAC Network website: www.cdacnetwork.org/tools-and-resources

This pocket guide is part of a longer guidance booklet developed by ACAPS and the CDAC Network, available at www.cdacnetwork.org

Phase 1 (first 72 hours)

To determine how best to communicate with communities, find out:

- Areas which have lost coverage of phone, radio and TV
- Mobile phone networks, radio and TV stations which are still operational
- Areas which have lost power
- How people are currently receiving and sharing information

Information about the impact of a crisis on existing media channels can be obtained from a range of sources:

- If on the ground, **direct observation** can give an idea of the damage (e.g. looking out for damaged telecom towers; tuning in to radio stations to check which are still on air; checking mobile phone signal).
- Calling national regulatory bodies, mobile phone companies, journalist networks (e.g. unions), popular radio and TV stations in the affected area and any media development agencies in country. Contact details can be found in the infoasaid Media Landscape Guides (for the 20 countries covered): www.cdacnetwork.org/tools-and-resources/media-landscape-guides
- Calling NGOs who have programmes in the affected area and asking about people's access to information and communications channels.
- For information on mobile phone connectivity, contact the Emergency Telecommunication Cluster or national/international associations of telecommunications companies (e.g. GSMA: www.gsma.com)

What could be done with this data?

- Consider how your agency will communicate with the crisis-affected population, given how the communication infrastructure has been impacted
- Ensure the information you have collected on communication channels and infrastructure is shared with relevant humanitarian structures/mechanisms in country (national and international)

Phase 2 (first 2 weeks)

Include these five questions in agency/inter-agency rapid needs assessments:

- What are the main channels of communication available to your community now? [Rank top 3 only, 1=most used]
 - What channels did you use before? [Rank top 3 only, 1=most used]

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Television | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media | <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth | <input type="checkbox"/> Music |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radio | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet | <input type="checkbox"/> Community leaders | <input type="checkbox"/> Film |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile phone call | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious leaders | <input type="checkbox"/> Theatre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile phone SMS | <input type="checkbox"/> Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Billboards | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaflets | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends & family | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Posters | <input type="checkbox"/> Loudspeakers (mobile /fixed) | <input type="checkbox"/> Health professionals | <input type="checkbox"/> Refused |

- What is preventing you getting the information you need now?
 - Are there groups within the community who have more difficulty accessing information and why? [Open ended question – note who and why alongside]

| | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No access to electricity | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't trust where the information is coming from |
| My device is damaged / lost: | <input type="checkbox"/> TV/radio station is no longer running (specify what happened) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TV | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile networks are down |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radio | <input type="checkbox"/> I can't buy credit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (write in) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile phone | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information is in wrong language | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information is written but I can't read | |

- Which sources of information do people trust the **most**? [Rank top 3]
 - Which sources do people trust the **least**? [Rank top 3]
 - Are there any groups who trust different sources of information (e.g. men/women, young/older people, disabled people) [Open ended question – note alongside]

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Television (specify channel) | <input type="checkbox"/> Government | <input type="checkbox"/> NGO worker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radio (specify station) | <input type="checkbox"/> Community leader | <input type="checkbox"/> UN staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Print media (specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other community members | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (write in) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internet (specify site) | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious leader | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media (specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> Armed forces | <input type="checkbox"/> Refused |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health professional | <input type="checkbox"/> Police | |

- What would the community like more information on at the moment? What do you need to know more about? [WARNING: This question is often misinterpreted to mean general needs rather than information needs, and may need further explanation; avoid leading the respondent]

| | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> News on what is happening here | <input type="checkbox"/> The weather |
| <input type="checkbox"/> News on what is happening at home | <input type="checkbox"/> How to get healthcare/medical attention |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finding missing people | <input type="checkbox"/> How to get help after attack or harassment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The security situation here | <input type="checkbox"/> How to stay safe to prevent attack/harassment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The security situation at home | <input type="checkbox"/> How to replace personal documentation (e.g. ID, birth certificate) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communicating with people who are in a different place | <input type="checkbox"/> How to get access to education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How to register for aid | <input type="checkbox"/> How to find work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How to get water | <input type="checkbox"/> How to get transport |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How to get food | <input type="checkbox"/> How to get money/financial support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How to get shelter/accommodation or shelter materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Information about possible return to place of origin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information about nutrition | <input type="checkbox"/> Information about relocation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food prices | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (write in) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local crop/livestock prices | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How to get cooking fuel/firewood | <input type="checkbox"/> Refused |

- How would you most like to communicate with aid agencies? (e.g. to ask a question, to complain or to make a suggestion) [Rank top 3 only]

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Face to face (at home) | <input type="checkbox"/> SMS | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media (specify site) | <input type="checkbox"/> Tweet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Face to face (office/desk) | <input type="checkbox"/> Email | <input type="checkbox"/> Suggestion box | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Phone call | <input type="checkbox"/> Letter | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio/TV show | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |

What could be done with this data?

- Based on the information collected, **develop a communication strategy** in line with your humanitarian programme that identifies aims, objectives, target audiences, key messages, communication methods and feedback channels. This will help to integrate communication activities into your overall response and ensure the content, audience and method/channel are appropriate.

A useful resource for developing messages is the infoaid Message Library (www.cdacnetwork.org/tools-and-resources/message-library)

- Explore ways to **more effectively use the communication channel(s) identified** by the community.