

Risk Communication: Preventing the H5N1 risk – Nigerian Experience

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Communication Environment

- Low perception of the importance of strategic communication in animal health management.
- Low perception of risk, motivation and lack of knowledge of the importance of disease reporting
- Role of Poverty in adoption of best practices
- Population, diverse traditional beliefs, customs and languages
- Suspicion of government efforts
- Weak and limited capability of communication practitioners
- High cost of communication and poor funding.
- Number and status of international borders
- Large and diverse migrant groups

AVIAN INFLUENZA OUTBREAK PHASE

Response to AI Outbreak

- Setting up of a National Public Enlightenment Committee (PEC) for sensitization on AI
- Establishment of PEC at State level
- Advocacy meetings with communication partners
- Press briefings
- Awareness and sensitization on electronic, print and traditional media
- Development of an Integrated Communication plan

Public Enlightenment Committee (PEC)

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    PEC((Public Enlightenment Committee (PEC))) --- PICA((Public info and communication))
    PEC --- FARN((Federal Agric. Rep. Network))
    PEC --- FEARA((Federal Emergency Resp. Agency))
    PEC --- FMDV((FMDV, NADIS, NADIS))
    PEC --- FH((Federal Health))
  
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Objectives of PEC

- Coordinate the development and implementation of an integrated action plan.
- Ensure that all stakeholders buy into and support government's strategy;
- Ensure that media and social mobilization players are equipped with the basic messages and materials to promote the adoption of positive behaviours and prevent the spread of AI.

Strategies

- Advocacy
- Identification of target audience and effective networks
- Community mobilization, IPC, dialogues and other rural approaches
- Public education through mass media.
- Surveys and participatory action research
- Use of IEC materials
- Feedbacks and evaluation
- Regular review/development of messages

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Key Audiences

- State and Local Governments
- Community, religious and traditional leaders
- Farming families with backyard poultry
- Youth and Children
- Poultry Association of Nigeria
- Fowl Sellers Associations
- Poultry workers and service providers
- Migrant population (Pastoralists, transporters etc)
- CBOs, NGOs, FBOs
- General Public

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Communication Interventions

- PSAs with basic AI messages: Separate, Wash, Cook, Report
- Nationwide airing of radio and TV jingles in English and major languages
- Production and distribution of media kits (UNICEF)
- Interactive AI programmes on radio and TV stations
- Production and distribution of IEC materials in major local languages.
- Website: www.fedlivestock.gov.ng, www.aicp.nigeria.org
- Strengthening of internal communication between the Federal, State and Local departments of veterinary services to enhance flow of information, disease reporting and other interventions.

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Interventions Contd..

Community Engagement

- Advocacy and Sensitization of Communities and Religious leaders and dissemination of AI prevention and Control messages in grazing Reserves through community dialogue, use of town criers and other local communication channels.
- Communication Surveillance and Message testing on AI carried out in collaboration with CDC, UNICEF and WB.
- Testing of Zandi's Song in two States (Story book intended for use by Children in Secondary Schools)

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Interventions Contd..

Capacity building

- Training of media practitioners
- Workshop on AI messages and materials Harmonization for communication personnel
- Capacity building and sensitization on AI outbreak and the role of stakeholders in the containment and control of the disease for surveillance agents, Animal Health Service providers, Livestock change agents and Poultry Farmers

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Communication and Compensation

Feb – July 2006:

- Increase in reporting mainly due to fear of the disease, sensitization and prompt payment of compensation to affected farmers.

July – November 2006:

- Drop in reporting probably due to delay in payment, lack of information on reason for delay which resulted in lack of trust.

December 2006 to 2008:


- Significant increase in reporting largely due to upward review of compensation rates, sustained sensitization and farmer participation in payment of compensation.

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Communication and Compensation

- Information surveillance carried out by PACE, CDC and UNICEF in 2006 and 2007 revealed that women and children owned over 80% of the poultry in backyard holdings.
- Information from compensation records however show that men collected over 80% of the compensation funds.

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Challenges I

- Low adoption of desirable practices
- Socio-economic challenges for livelihood and everyday existence
- Long held traditional practices.
- Inadequate resources for communication activities
- Commercialisation of national media.
- Achieving seamless collaboration between government and partners
- Lack of joint micro-planning and implementation among communication partners.


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POST AI OUTBREAK PHASE

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Interventions

- Review of strategies/plans taking into consideration the key elements of HPAI communication strategy: prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.
 - Meetings held in collaboration with Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Information, FAO, UNICEF, USAID, IOM, etc.
- Systematic involvement of actors along the value chain in design, planning and implementation of HPAI communication activities.
 - Meetings with community leaders, Poultry Association of Nigeria, Association of Fowl Sellers and Processors, Transporters etc

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Interventions Contd...

Capacity building for animal health communication focal persons (CFPs) at Federal and State levels

- Behaviour Change Communication training held for 74 CFPs from Federal Department of Livestock
- BCC training held for 37 CFPs from State Ministries of Agriculture

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Dignitaries at the opening ceremony of a trainings held in Bauchi State.

Participants in group discussions during one of the trainings.



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Interventions Contd...

Communication Surveillance

- Pre-Implementation
 - Mapping of communities and target audiences
 - Development of step-by-step guidelines for implementation of activities
 - Training of CFPs and community members to administer questionnaires
 - Checklist for standardization
 - Review of Community Dialogue/FGD procedures
 - Development of Monitoring and reporting formats

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Interventions Contd...



Administration of questionnaires by trained CFPs and community members

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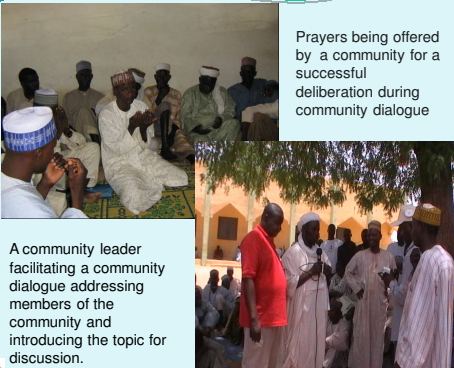
Interventions Contd...

Engaging Communities

- Advocacy meetings with key influential community leaders to ensure commitment and support: Held in 37 States (2 communities per state)
- Community mobilization using community based participatory approaches: community dialogue, Focus Group Discussions, Community surveillance, Community radio listening centres etc.
- Mobilization and piloting of a community surveillance and disease reporting network

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Interventions Contd...

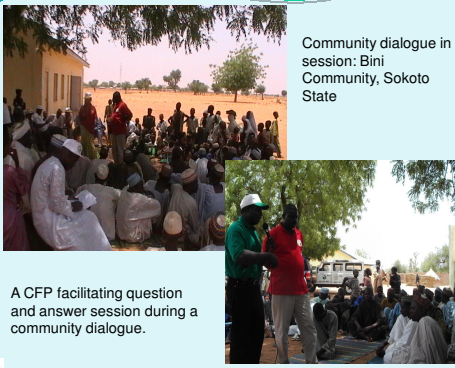


Prayers being offered by a community for a successful deliberation during community dialogue

A community leader facilitating a community dialogue addressing members of the community and introducing the topic for discussion.

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Interventions Contd...




Community dialogue in session: Bini Community, Sokoto State


A CFP facilitating question and answer session during a community dialogue.

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Focus Group Discussion in Bauchi State, Feb 2009



Focus Group Discussion in Oyo State, July 2009



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Design, Production and Dissemination of Promotional Materials

- Posters
- Stickers
- Newsletters
- T-Shirts/Caps
- TV/Radio programs in various languages including community radio
- Roll up Banners and Bill boards




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Some Promotional Materials in use



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Interventions Could...

Media Engagement

- Knowledge and skills development for media practitioners
- Media dialogue to build relationships as well as share experiences and lessons learned
- Media field visits
- Production and Airing of sector specific rural based radio and TV spots/programmes:

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Challenges II

- Weak capacity of community-based resource persons to facilitate quality dialogues that will translate to do-able action plans.
- Volunteerism already undermined by other programmes resulting in high demand for gifts by Community leaders.
- Inadequate logistics and poor funding hamper sustained community engagement activities and follow up actions, resulting in low level of desired improvements in knowledge and behaviour change
- The obvious disconnect among communication players, stakeholders due mainly to lack of coordination of interests and areas of intervention.

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Critical Issues/Challenges

- Low perception and late acceptance of the importance role of communication in disease prevention and control by livestock and animal health professionals posed a huge challenge at the onset of the outbreak.
- Dearth of communication capacity within the Ministry of Agriculture and the urgent need to consciously build this internal capacity at all levels to competently handle animal health communication interventions for prevention and control of emerging and re emerging diseases.
- Deliberate hoarding of information, resulting in misinformation and half truths
- The slow process of getting approval for dissemination of information of public importance.

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Lessons Learned

- Early and meaningful involvement of community leaders and other key players are important for the success and sustainability of any communication intervention and adoption of ideal behaviours.
- Community engagement sessions need to be sustained to bring about desired level of change from basic awareness to practice.
- Inter-Agency collaboration in programme communication offers additional opportunities to harmonise and promote strategic approaches at all levels.
- Community dialogue and focus group discussion are exciting ways of addressing common barriers and promoting key behaviours
- **unrelenting international support for animal health communication helped to draw in-country attention to its importance and wake up call to action.**

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Way Forward

- Continue to advocate for mainstreaming and proper funding of animal Health Communication
- Development and strengthening of communication structures and networks at all levels
- Ensure that community based programmes are strategic in order to effectively channel scarce financial and human resources in addressing the potentially at greatest risk populations.
- Using information from community based participatory research (CBPR), Community Capacity Enhancement (CCE) interventions, to upgrade knowledge and skills for improved strategic communication.
- Conduct a KAP assessment, and share findings and lessons learned with key players.


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Multi-sectoral Collaboration

Collaborating Ministries/ Institutions/Projects

- WB-Avian Influenza Control Project:
 - FMOH, FM&C,
- Media Outfits:
 - FRCN, NTA, VON, BBC (Hausa Service)
 - National Centre for Nomadic Education
- Development partners:
 - FAO, AU-IBAR, EU, OIE, USAID, USDA/APHIS, CDC, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, IOM .
- NGOs, CBOs:
 - PAN, NVMA, Fowl Sellers Association, Pastoral Resolve, National Union of Road Transport Workers

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THANK YOU

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