

RECOMMENDATIONS ON SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL CHANGE COMMUNICATION FOR STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PREPARATION AND RESPONSE TO EBOLA CRISIS



International Advisory Products and Systems (i-APS) has been closely engaged in researching challenges faced by communities and organizations in their efforts to establish control measures in eradicating the spread of the Ebola Virus Disease in Republic of Guinea and Sierra Leone. **Through our findings, we have identified recommendations for future strategic actions which are focused on the social mobilization response and communication challenges that led to the resistance and non-adoption of preventative behavior by communities.**

We continue supporting our partners to ensure that our learning and findings are integrated into a more strategic approach to combatting and communicating with the public about Ebola.

In the following we present specific recommended actions that can lead to more cohesive and effective behavior change communication strategies and response in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia and other countries that may be faced with future Ebola epidemics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adequate attention to socio-cultural and behavioral challenge

- Better balance between medical and non-medical response needed.
- Strategic responses are required.

Develop an integrated Social and Behavior Change Communication Strategy (SBCC)

- Support effective community participation for enhanced results.
- Decentralize social mobilization and communication.

International Advisory, Products and Systems (i-APS) is a consulting firm that helps organizations measure, adapt and deliver through a proven, people-first approach. A U.S.-based, minority and woman-owned business, i-APS leverages global expertise with local presence to transform organizations and communities into partners for change.

We supported the work of the following partners: Plan International, Social Mobilisation Action Consortium (SMAC) - Digital Data Collection and Community-based surveillance system for Ebola Virus Disease in Sierra Leone: GOAL, BBC Media Action, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, FOCUS 1000 and Restless Development, Medicos del Mundo/Doctors of the World, and International Medical Corps.

To learn more about **combatting and communicating** with the public about Ebola, and or our work Ebola Treatment Centers please visit www.i-aps.com or contact Ardi Mejzini, i-APS Global Communications Manager amejzini@i-aps.com.

- Shore-up contact tracing.
- Developing an effective social and behavior change communication strategy.
- Develop and pre-test messages and materials.
- Intensify efforts in enhancing community engagement for an effective communication and mobilization strategy for social and behavioral change.
- Engage community level agents of change for higher impact.
- Start, evaluate, learn, adapt and expand activities for a more strategic and effective response to any future Ebola outbreaks.

Better understanding of socio-cultural and behavioral issues

- Social research tools are needed to respond to the Ebola Crisis.
- The documentation and dissemination of SBCC as a success story in order to guide the response to future outbreaks.

Prepare for future outbreaks

- Prepare 14 vulnerable countries for SBCC response.
- Develop National Preparedness Action Plans including SBCC.

Social and Behavior Change Communication and Social Mobilization Contents in an Action Plan

- Prepare and communicate key messages key messages through mass media and inter-personal communications.

