COVID-19 – External communication activities in response to stigma and/or to violence against health workers in your context

This document is part of the broader HCiD action plan and should be consider as the Communication contribution to the action plan.

This document is a step-by-step guide to help you to take external communication actions on the issue of stigma of and/or attacks on health and humanitarian workers, resident or foreigner, in your context. This document is short and simple but doesn’t cover everything. Think of it more as a checklist.

For more information, please contact glopes@icrc.org

Step 1 – Is there stigma/violence in your contexts?
With your environment scanning and HCiD colleagues, put a specific emphasis on the question of stigma and violence. Determine the level of this stigma/violence (low, medium, high) so that you have a basis for discussing the issue with your management.

Guiding questions

Who is subject to stigma/violence?
- Health workers
- Foreigners
- Humanitarian workers
- Others (specify)

What are the types of stigma/violence?
- Physical
- Verbal/in person
- On social media/online
- Ostracization (denial of access to services, eviction from lodgements)

Who stigmatizes/acts violently?
- General public/bystanders
- Authorities
- Armed/specific groups
- Others

Step 2 – What are the pattern of stigma/violence?
Look at the results from your environment scanning and HCiD monitoring and check if you can see any pattern.
Are there recurring events or characteristics in the stigma/violence? What seem to be the underlying issues (fear, lack of space in medical centre leading to frustration, lack of trust in institutions, misunderstanding, rumours, etc)? How is the ICRC/IFRC/NS perceived?

Additional tools: Perception Toolkit

Please report these incidents to your HCiD focal point. TRAK is putting in place a document for reporting.
Step 3 – Is the NS willing to take up this issue?
Take a look around you and check whether anyone is doing something about stigmatization and related violence. Is the National Society working on this issue? Are other organisations, national or international, working on this issue?

If yes, what are their responses? Do we bring an added-value? Can we support existing initiatives (translation, financially or human resources)? Are there audiences/issues that are forgotten?

If no, why no one is doing anything? What can the ICRC/IFRC/NS do?

Step 4 – What is your objective and your audience?
In relation to Step 2 and Step 3, define precisely what you want to achieve with your external communication activities and what is your audience in relation to this objective (don’t say “general public”). This will help you to measure your impact (see Step 7).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Audience</th>
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Audiences: who can impact your objectives? Who exactly do you want to reach? Do you already know this audience? What are their information habits? Who do they trust? Who influences them?

Step 5 – Multi-channel response nested in the broader HCID response
In relation to Step 2, who in the organization should be part of the response?

- Think complementarity!
- Think about relevant channel for relevant audiences.
- Think about direct channels (social media, media, posters, radio spots, song competition…).
- Think about indirect channels (who can pass messages for you, artists, influencers…).
- Think about authorities (they can also play a role in clarifying the situation).
- Think about who in the delegation has contacts, a network and knowledge (colleagues involved in sport clubs for instance).

Additional questions: Is the ICRC/IFRC/NS a credible and recognized voice? Are there other voices that can pass this message jointly or alone?

Do not forget to tailor your response (and the channel) to the audience(s)!
Cultural understanding, socio-economic background, literacy rate, history of the context, level of trust in institutions, perception of medical, health or humanitarian workers.

Step 6 – Test your response
Once you have your messages, please test them. Start with colleagues and then with interlocutors and possibly some of the audiences you want to target.

Step 7 – Share, measure, analyse and repeat
Create a table to keep track of whether and how things have changed over time and use your environment scanning (and if needed some additional desk review) to check what might have motivated any shift you notice. In relation to Step 4, check the success of your activities and
modify/repeat.