



# DSWD

Department of Social Welfare and Development

## **CRISIS COMMUNICATION MANUAL**



# PURPOSE & GOAL

This Crisis Communications Manual provides DSWD Central Office and its Regional Offices essential information and materials that will assist its staff and other personnel in handling communication during an emergency or crisis.

This manual sets forth a unified and consistent structure of all communications before, during, and after any foreseen and unforeseen natural disasters and occurrences so that everyone involved can quickly and accurately transmit vital information to various stakeholders, including the public.

This manual establishes accountability early on with focus on the Crisis Communication Team who can significantly help calm the public and greatly minimize negative reaction and maximize, not only the department's integrity and reputation, but also compliance with the department's advice and recommendations before, during, and after a crisis; or on an issue that needs to be managed.

This manual does not promise to overcome all communication challenges but by applying its communication principles, it may help in saving innumerable lives and win the public's trust. For these reasons, the Crisis Communication Team should familiarize themselves with this manual.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Purpose and Goal.....	i
What is Crisis Communication.....	1
Principles of Effective Crisis Communication.....	3
Types of Hazards that May Induce Disaster.....	4
Types of Human Induced Hazards.....	5
Types of Management Crises.....	5
How People React & Cope During A Crisis.....	6
How Communication Can Help.....	7
Communication from Pre-Crisis to Resolution.....	8-9
Pre-Crisis	
Beginning of the Crisis	
In the Crisis	
Resolution	
Messages for Different Audiences.....	10
Key Situational Messages.....	11
How People Assess Your Messages.....	13
Speed.....	13
Accuracy.....	13
Credibility.....	13
Developing the Crisis Communication Plan.....	14
Pre-Crisis Stage.....	14
Plan and Prepare.....	14
Beginning of Crisis.....	15
The Immediate Questions that People Want	
Answered—Fast!.....	15
The Fundamental Function of DSWD's Crisis	
Communication Team.....	16
In the Crisis.....	18
To-Do List When in the Middle of a Crisis.....	18
Resolution.....	19
Evaluation.....	19
The Minimum Requirements (What to Include in the Plan).....	20
Nine Steps for Success in Crisis Communication Planning.....	22
Crisis Communication Team Organizational Chart (Central Office)....	23
Crisis Communication Team Organizational Chart (Regional Office)....	24
Duties of Lead Communication Officer.....	25
Duties of Information Facility Liaison.....	26
Duties of Information Gathering Officer.....	26
Duties of Information Dissemination Officer.....	28
Duties of Operations Support Officer.....	29
Duties of Lead Liaison Officer.....	31
Implementing the Plan (Be First, Be Right, Be Credible).....	32
Verification.....	32
Notification and Coordination.....	32
Assessment.....	33
Assignments.....	34
Prepare Information and Get Approvals.....	34
Release of Information Through Predetermined Channels..	35
Get Feedback and Analyze How the Crisis Communication	
Team Did During the Crisis.....	36
Conduct Public Education.....	37
Monitoring.....	37
The Spokesperson.....	38
Spokesperson's Role in Crisis Communication.....	39
What Makes a Good Spokesperson.....	40
Spokesperson Traps and How to Avoid Them During a Crisis..	40
Media Interview Goals & Pitfalls.....	41
Interview Goals.....	41

Interview Traps.....	42
Presscon Tips.....	43
In-Person Interview.....	44
Telephone Interview.....	45
Television Interview.....	46
Radio Interview.....	47
Spokesperson in Public Meetings.....	48
Intense Emotions and Angry Responses.....	48
How to Keep Calm and Focused in Emotion-Filled Public Meetings..	48
Assessing Spokesperson Skills.....	50
A Spokesperson's Skills and Traits.....	50
Working & Interacting with the Media.....	51
Meeting Media Needs Throughout the Crisis.....	52
How to Get Information to the Media.....	55
Establishing Relationship & Working with Communities.....	56
Other Communication Channels.....	57
The Alternative Communication Channels.....	58
Social Media.....	59
Philippines Social Media Landscape.....	59
Working with Social Media Before, During, and After a Crisis.....	61
Youtube.....	63
Youtube As A Crisis Communication Strategy.....	63
Flyers.....	64
Flyer Production Guidelines.....	64
ANNEX: Checklists, Templates, Worksheets, Samples.....	65
Immediate Communication Response Checklist.....	65
Crisis Communication Team.....	68
Other Helpful Contacts.....	72
Media Inquiries Contact List.....	72
Talking Points Template.....	73
Five-Step Model for Preparing Messages.....	74
Key Audience Contact List.....	75
Media Contact Log.....	76
News Release Template.....	77
Media Tips and Resources.....	78
Crisis Messaging Principles.....	78
Media Basics.....	78
Questions Media Always Ask.....	80
Questions The Crisis Communication Team Should Ask and Answer.....	81
Questions You Don't Have to Answer.....	81
Irrelevant Questions.....	82
Multiple Questions.....	82
A or B Multiple Questions.....	82
Absent Third Party Questions.....	82
Ranking Questions.....	82
Personal Opinion Questions.....	82
Additional Tips When Dealing with Media.....	83
How Media Behave in a Crisis.....	83
How Should DSWD Respond.....	83
How Media Frame a Controversial News Story.....	84
How to be the Hero in a Controversy.....	85
When You're Put on the Spot.....	87
Handling Hostility.....	87
Response Cluster.....	88

# “ WHAT IS CRISIS COMMUNICATION? ”



**Crisis Communication** refers to the communication activities that DSWD's Central Office and Regional Offices undertake when a disaster or crisis occurs. These activities include the gathering, processing, and transmission of information about the event or incident to employees and their families, various partners, other government agencies involved in responding to the crisis, media, and the general public. This information could help reduce the impact of a crisis on the population or the department.

### TYPICALLY, A CRISIS

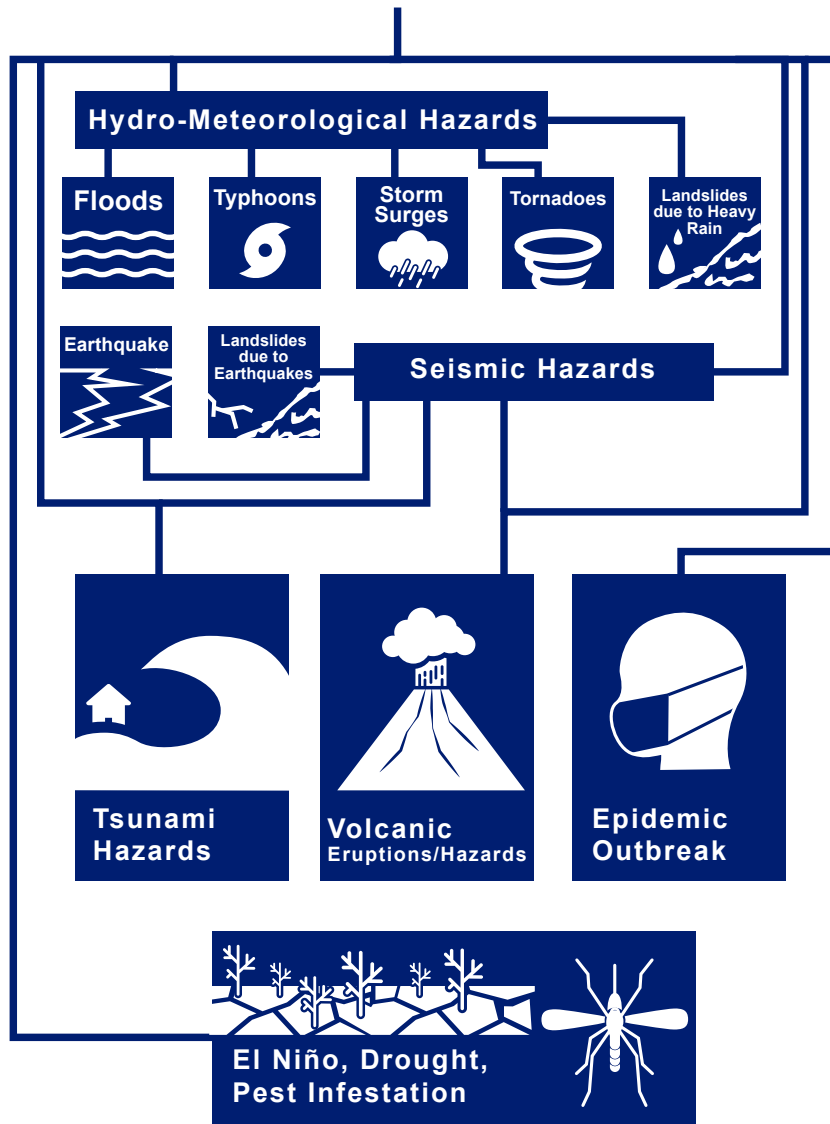
 <p>Turns up without warning</p>	 <p>Demands an immediate response</p>
 <p>May or may not be in the department's control</p>	 <p>Could wreak havoc on a population or DSWD's reputation</p>

## PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE CRISIS COMMUNICATION

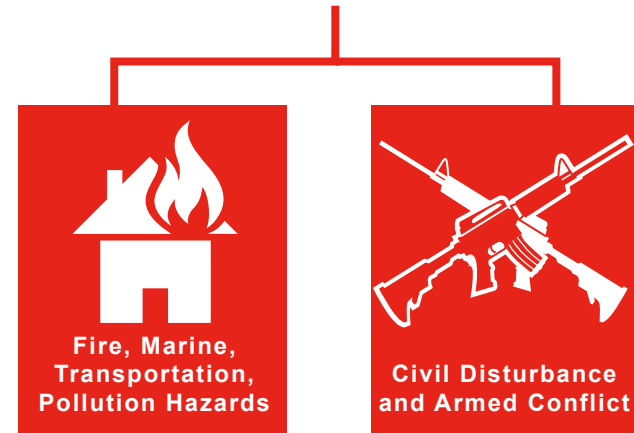
- 1 Be First:** The first source of information often becomes the preferred source. 
- 2 Be Right:** Information accuracy establishes credibility. Include what is known, what is not known, and what is being done to fill in the gaps. 
- 3 Be Credible:** Honesty and truthfulness should never be compromised during crises. 
- 4 Be Empathetic:** Acknowledge the suffering of people. Address what they are feeling and the challenges they face. 
- 5 Be an Advocate for Action:** Providing people things to do can ease anxieties, help restore order in the affected communities, and aid in restoring their sense of control. 
- 6 Be Respectful:** It promotes cooperation and rapport. 

A crisis is any sudden, unplanned event that creates major disturbances that trigger fear, anxiety, or confusion among the public. While it is difficult to predict when or where a crisis will occur, knowing the types of crisis that DSWD may encounter is extremely important in planning to minimize damage to lives, property, and reputation.

## TYPES OF HAZARDS THAT MAY INDUCE DISASTER



## TYPES OF HUMAN INDUCED HAZARDS



## TYPES OF MANAGEMENT CRISES



*(Note: The crisis communication manual can be adapted to any crisis, disaster, or issue management.)*

# HOW PEOPLE REACT & COPE DURING A CRISIS

People affected by a crisis react and cope differently. Under intense stress, people may —



- Not fully understand the information they hear
- Quickly forget the information they heard
- Misinterpret the many messages they are getting

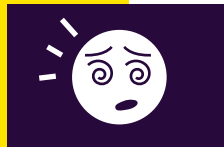


- Not attempt a logical approach to decision making
- Follow bad examples of others
- Ignore or disbelieve distressing information



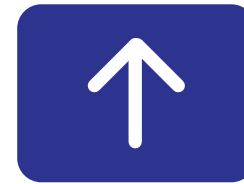
- Assume that the situation may not be as bad as it really is
- Be terrified, anxious, confused, and panicky

- Feel hopeless and helpless
- Behave inappropriately to avoid dangers or threats, which could be harmful to them and other people
- Believe that officials are not doing anything for their welfare or well-being



# HOW COMMUNICATION CAN HELP

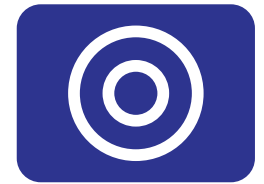
By understanding how people react and take in information in times of crisis or disaster, communication needs to be —



**Simple**



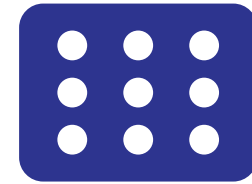
**Quick**



**Accurate**



**Credible**



**Consistent**

Information must also —

- **Be repeated**
- **Come from different credible sources**
- **Be specific to the emergency that people are experiencing**
- **Provide a reassuring course of action that people can carry out**



# COMMUNICATION FROM PRE-CRISIS TO RESOLUTION

## THE CRISIS COMMUNICATION STAGES



Any crisis, disaster, or emergency evolves in stages. The communication, likewise, must evolve through these stages. By dividing the crisis into stages, the communicators can anticipate the information needs of the various stakeholders and respond accordingly. For each of these stages, communicators need to create and deliver specific types of messages to the audience. Communication, therefore, should be integrated with the overall crisis response plan. Moreover, every agency and department involved in emergency planning and response should know the members of the Crisis Communication Team.



# MESSAGES FOR DIFFERENT AUDIENCES

There are different audiences in any crisis. And the needs and interests of those audiences change as the crisis develops. Understanding this together with the audiences' cultural background, location, their preferred communication channels and, yes, even their values could go a long way in effectively communicating to them. Another important thing worth considering is their physical and psychological proximity to the crisis. They may be in an area that is directly affected or they may have relatives in that area. It is important to understand these things as they will affect how messages are received.

And because of technology, they do not just receive information anymore. They also send it. People in disaster zones can post real-time information and will often repost and re-tweet official messages; and, likewise, unofficial messages and rumors.

It is also best to remember that the public have a heightened awareness of government and its different branches during a crisis as the government becomes the default and critical source of information. They are listening. Closely. Analytically. And critically. Meeting the audiences' varying information needs means being as open, honest, and transparent as possible every time in any situation.

## KEY SITUATIONAL MESSAGES

### REGRET

The first thing to do is to express concern that the crisis happened

SO SORRY...



### RESPONSIBILITY

Assure everyone that various agencies and departments have already been tasked to look after the safety and well-being of people in the disaster area



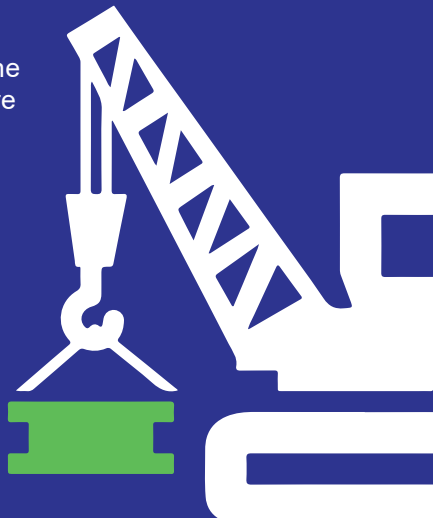
## REDUCE



Stakeholders, partners, and the general public must know that the government has taken steps to minimize sufferings and casualties for the duration of the crisis

## RESTORATION

If appropriate, detail how the government will help restore the lives of people in the affected area/s.



## HOW PEOPLE ASSESS YOUR MESSAGES

The audiences listen and analyze the value of the communicator's message before they take any action. They usually, and immediately, make a judgement on the content of the message based on:

### SPEED

Being first to communicate not only positions DSWD as the primary source of information. Speed of communication also tells audiences you are prepared and there is a system in place. If you are not first, they may turn to other less credible sources.

### ACCURACY



Responding quickly with wrong information can harm the department's credibility. Therefore, get the facts right

- Repeat the facts over and over, using easily understood terms, no jargon
- Avoid sketchy details, especially in the early part
- Ensure that other agencies and departments have the same facts and speak with one voice. Inconsistent messages undermines credibility

### CREDIBILITY



Credibility of all messages, written or spoken, is important for the audience to trust the department and believe what they are being told or instructed to do. Establishing this credibility relies on:

- **Expertise of the messenger**
  - Education
  - Position
  - Title
  - Role in DSWD
- **Intent toward the receiving audience**
  - Empathetic
  - Caring
  - Committed
  - Dedicated
- **Trustworthiness of messenger**
  - Honesty and openness about the realities of the crisis
  - Accuracy of the message
  - Easily understood without jargon and euphemisms, which imply lack of self-confidence and honesty

# DEVELOPING THE CRISIS COMMUNICATION PLAN

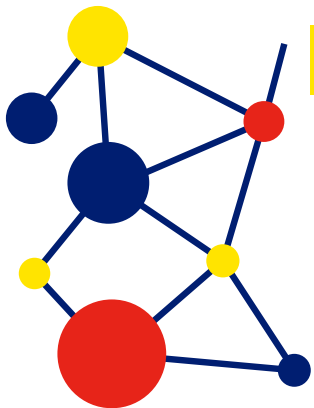
## PRE-CRISIS STAGE

### Plan and prepare

- Identify the Crisis Communication Team
- Identify and designate the spokesperson
- Develop training for communicators — the Crisis Communication Team — in the Central Office and Regional Offices
- Identify means and methods of communication
- Cultivate alliances with other stakeholders (officials and experts) and develop a system wherein all those involved speak with one voice
- Develop a system where resources are shared and available to these officials and experts



- Identify communication and information resources
- Develop systems and procedures for these resources
- Develop systems and redundancies, like hotlines, information centers, and websites, including social media
- Build and test communications systems and networks
- Anticipate questions, develop messages, test messages, refine messages
- Conduct a crisis communication drill to assess and clarify what needs to be done



All important planning work should be done at this stage. While all the planning in the world cannot guarantee a 100% success rate, the lack of it puts the department at a great disadvantage

When a crisis is looming, it is also the job of the Crisis Communication Team to:

- Monitor emerging risks
- Educate the public about these risks
- Prepare the public for the possibility of an unfavorable event
- Suggest actions that the public can take to reduce the likelihood of harm
- Provide warning messages regarding an imminent threat

## BEGINNING OF THE CRISIS

### Communication Strategies

The beginning of a crisis is often characterized by confusion, uncertainty, and intense media interest. An information vacuum usually exists. And people want that vacuum filled. This is the time to establish the department as the credible source of information about the crisis and what the public can do about it. As the Vice Chair of the Response Pillar responsible for the activation of the Quick Response Team (QRT) and overall coordination, DSWD can provide up-to-date situational awareness locally, regionally, and nationally to other government agencies, stakeholders, organizations, and the general public.

### The Immediate Questions that People Want Answered — Fast!

What happened?

What is being done?

What should they do?

What is the threat to them?

How long is the duration of the threat?

Who is going to fix it?

**The fundamental function of DSWD's Crisis Communication Team during the onset of a crisis is to:**

- Gather information about the event
- Verify the magnitude of the disaster as quickly as possible
- Make sense of the information and separate the factual from the rumors
- Draft initial messages where specific details can be filled in later
- Clear all information with designated clearance officials and personnel
- Coordinate with other response groups and agencies

There are not many chances to get the communications right during this stage. Decisions in relation to communication have critical implications and organizational reputations are on the line.

Based on the available information, the Crisis Communication Team must establish a general understanding of the crisis situation, seriousness, and anticipated outcomes in a way that is:



The Crisis Communication Team should also:

- Coordinate messages with other organizations and agencies
- Acknowledge the crisis with empathy and reassurance to promote calm
- Prepare to answer questions quickly, accurately, and as completely as possible
- Say what is currently being done; and the likely duration of the crisis
- Explain to people in simple terms about the possible threats and dangers to them and their families
- Provide and promote emergency courses of action and personal response activities so that people can help themselves to alleviate their anxieties
- Point people to where and how to get information
- Commit to the public that the department will maintain communication and will always remain accessible
- Avoid overstating what is already known
- Avoid overly optimistic statements as it can reduce credibility
- Inform the public about the responsibilities of the various organizations and agencies involved in the response



# IN THE CRISIS

## Communication Strategies

As the event develops, the Crisis Communication Team can expect sustained media interest and scrutiny, especially if and when there are unexpected developments, rumors and speculations, misinformation, disinformation, or misleading information. In addition, outside experts and professionals, and other people not associated with the response may comment publicly, usually on-the-air, and contradict, misinterpret, or challenge the Crisis Communication Team's messages. These criticisms are inevitable.

That is why aside from closely monitoring and assessing the crisis and allocating its information resources, it is essential that the Crisis Communication Team be always on top of the information flow and continue its close coordination with everyone. Tracking communication and audiences at this stage become increasingly important. The workload also increases.



### To-Do-List When in the Middle of a Crisis

Make sure the public is continually updated

Make the public understand the ongoing risks and provide information on how they can mitigate these risks

Provide background and supportive information to those who need it

Encourage people to support and cooperate with response and recovery efforts

Get and collect feedback from the affected public — listen, learn, and assess

Correct rumors and speculations, misinformation, disinformation, or any misleading information

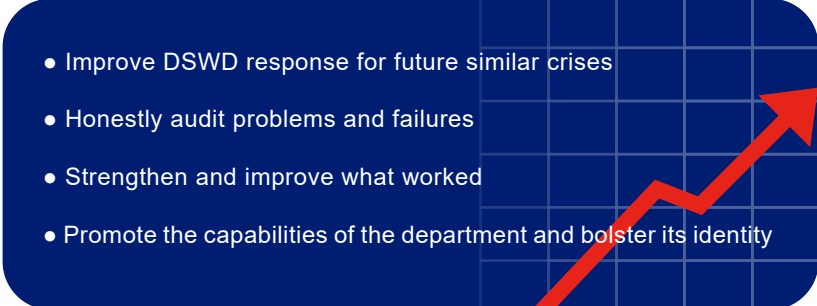
Embolden people to believe that they can take steps to protect themselves, their families, and their community. Persist in explaining those steps

Validate and endorse people's informed decision-making based on their knowledge of risks and benefits

# RESOLUTION

## Communication Strategies

The crisis and resolution stages usually merge into one as the crisis subsides. It is important to make people aware that the rehabilitation or rebuilding work may take a considerable time but recovery systems are well in place. At this stage, there may be a decrease in media interest. However, once the crisis is resolved, the communicators need to respond to intense, and sometimes fierce, media scrutiny about the handling of the crisis by the government. This is an opportune time to reinforce the department's messages regarding public safety, health, etc. and start a tri-media and social media education campaign as people will be more open to risk avoidance and mitigation.

- 
- Improve DSWD response for future similar crises
  - Honestly audit problems and failures
  - Strengthen and improve what worked
  - Promote the capabilities of the department and bolster its identity

# EVALUATION

## ✓ To-Do-List

It is important to assess the execution of the communication plan when the crisis is over

Evaluate audience responses and communication effectiveness

Document and communicate lessons learned to all concerned — what worked and what areas still need to be strengthened and improved

Identify and list specific actions to refine the department's crisis communication capabilities

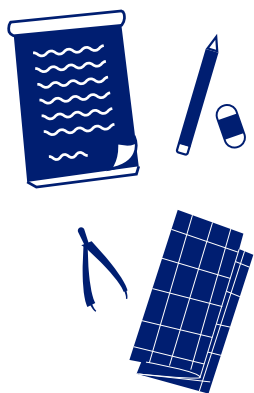
Preserve and keep alive the tie-ups that had been developed during the crisis

# THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS (WHAT TO INCLUDE IN THE PLAN)

Fully integrating DSWD's Crisis Communication Plan in the local, regional, and national crisis response plan is imperative as it is the go-to-document for must-have information during a crisis. As a valuable resource, it should be updated annually as risk, resources, people, and responsibilities change.

At the very least, the following should form part of the communication plan:

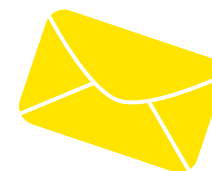
- Signed endorsement from chairperson, vice-chairperson, and heads of the eleven clusters of the Response Pillar
- Assigned duties and responsibilities for public information teams
- Expedited clearance procedures
- Agreements on who releases what, when, how
- Local, regional, national media contact lists, including after-hours news desks
- Procedures of coordination with the members of the Response Pillar
- Designated spokespersons of the eleven clusters



- Response Pillar members' after-hours contact numbers
- Contact lists for Response Pillar's Information partners:
  - Governor and Mayor's public affairs officer
  - Local and regional police information officers
  - Local and regional DepED & DOH information officers
  - Red Cross and other non-governmental organizations information officers



- Agreements and procedures to join the Response Pillar in its center, if activated
- Procedures to secure needed resources, like place and space, equipment, and personnel, to operate the public information and media operation during a crisis 24-7, if necessary
- Information distribution methods to communicate to the public, stakeholders, and partners during a crisis include the following:
  - Websites
  - Social media channels, such as Facebook and Twitter feeds
  - E-mail lists
  - Broadcast fax
  - Door-to-door leaflets
  - Press releases
  - Hotlines
  - Barangay officials with megaphone going around the different communities
- Lists of stakeholders and likely stakeholders with demographic and background descriptions; ways to reach them

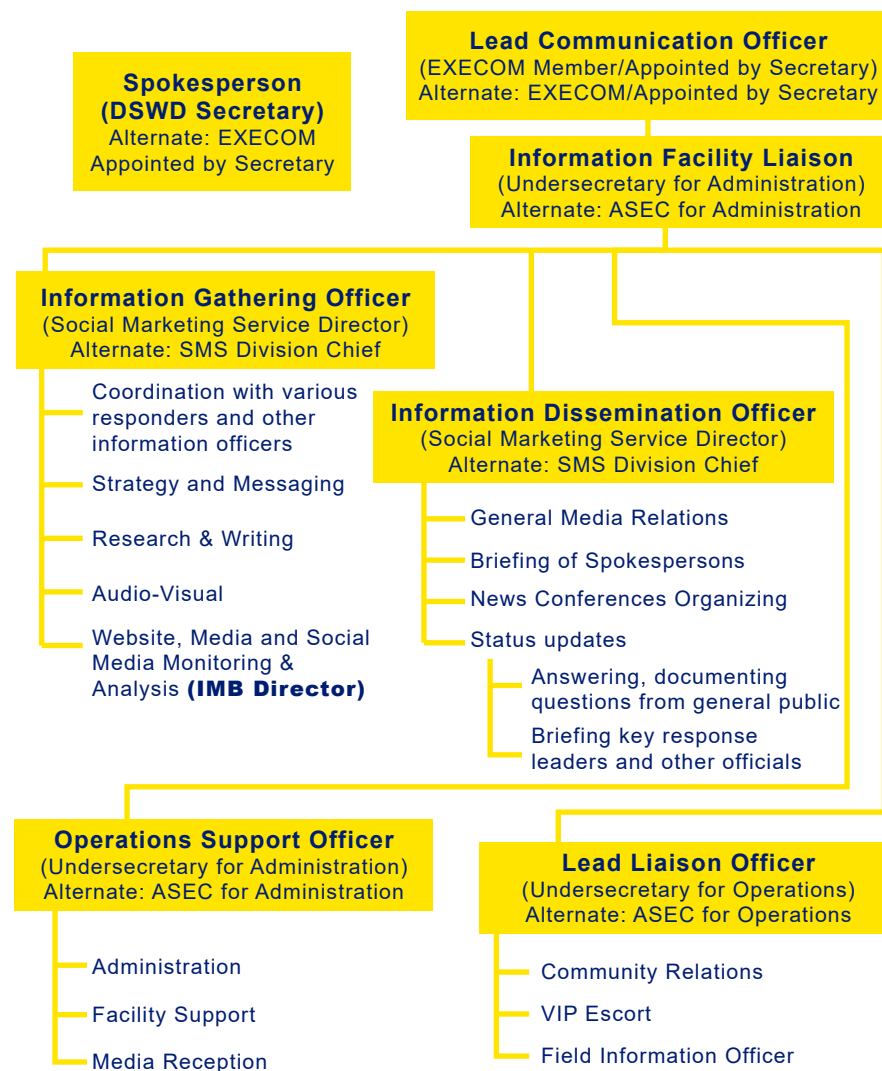


# 9 STEPS FOR SUCCESS IN CRISIS COMMUNICATION PLANNING

1. Get signed endorsements from the Response Pillar's Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and heads of the eleven clusters as they have an important role to play in its implementation.
2. Specify the responsibilities of information teams assigned to the media, public, social media, and partners and decide who is in charge of the release of information. It is the responsibility of the Crisis Communication Team to make certain that information is reaching all audiences through their preferred channels of communication. The staff of the information team shall be responsible for:
  - Gathering information
  - Disseminating information
  - Supporting operations
  - Liaising
3. The plan should have a procedure for information verification and clearance
  - Release accurate information quickly
  - Clear all information simultaneously, in person, if possible
  - Give a courtesy check to other response agencies with a stake in the information you are planning to release
4. Agreements on who releases what, when, how
5. Have all media contact lists, including news directors and editors, with after-hour numbers in thumb drives or secure servers and have hard copies as backup
  - Include cell and landline numbers, e-mail addresses, and fax numbers
6. Establish a procedure for coordinating with the response teams
  - Include an organizational chart in the plan to find key resources quickly
  - Swap names, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, roles and responsibilities with other partner organizations
7. Designate spokespersons
  - Select spokespersons based on ability and availability, not solely on position in the organization
  - Train and refresh spokespersons regularly
  - Include experts outside DSWD who can perform as alternative spokespersons
8. Have agreements to join Response Pillar's information center
9. Establish procedures in securing resources, like place and space, equipment, and personnel to operate 24/7
  - Include a checklist of ALL needed resources in the plan, including paper, pencils, bottled water, chargers, batteries, etc.

# CRISIS COMMUNICATION TEAM ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

(Central Office)



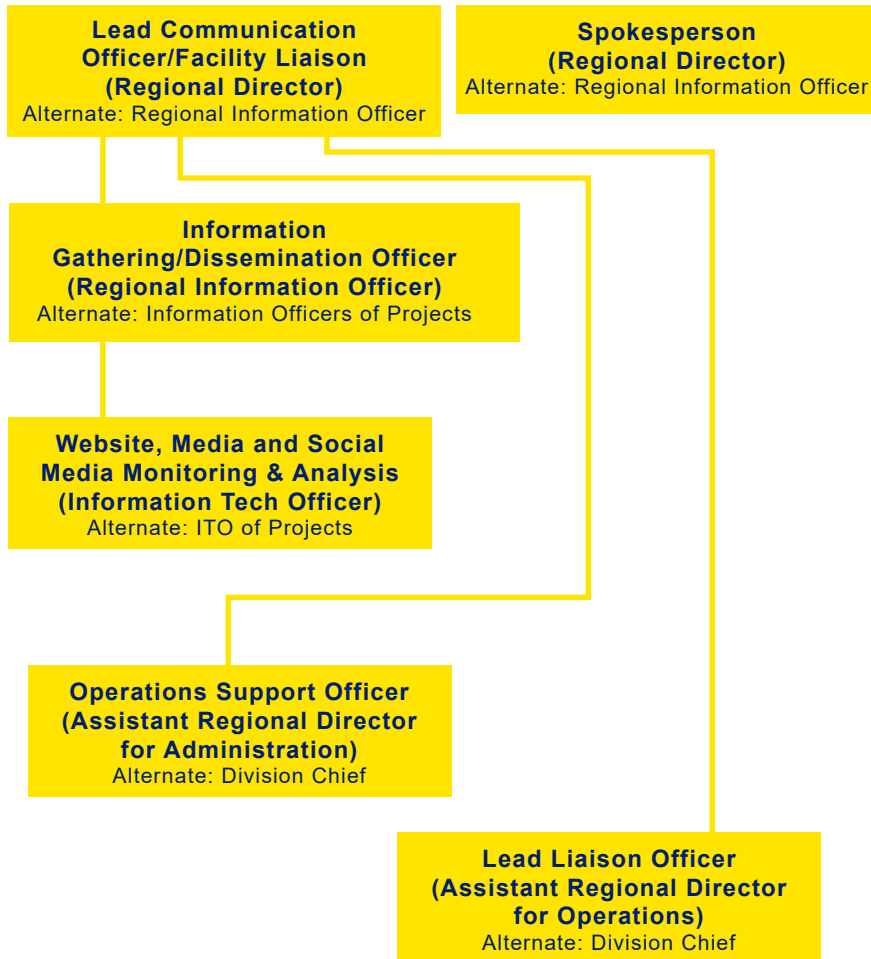
*This chart should be flexible and scalable depending on personnel support and size or magnitude of the crisis. For example, for smaller events or crises, an individual can perform more than one function. For bigger events, one function might be performed by several personnel.*

*For the Crisis Communication Team, please fill in the name, phone, cell phone, and email of each member on Page 68.*



# CRISIS COMMUNICATION TEAM ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

(Regional Office)



*This chart should be flexible and scalable depending on personnel support and size or magnitude of the crisis. For example, for smaller events or crisis, an individual can perform more than one function. For bigger events, one function might be performed by several personnel.*



- Activates the crisis communication team and plan based on careful evaluation of the crisis and anticipated information demands of the media, stakeholders and the general public
- Presides over the work related to information release to media, stakeholders, and the public
- Collaborates with other Response Pillar communication officers
- Ensures consistency of messages
- Provides updates to Response Pillar key leaders and their respective information officers.
- Recommends to Response Pillar key leaders what information should be released based on Response Pillar's role in the crisis.
- Must know Response Pillar's incident-specific policy and the science behind it. These should be considered in information to be released to media, stakeholders, and the public.
- Reviews and approves materials for release.
- Obtains clearance for materials with policy- or topic- sensitive information from the Response Pillar leadership.

*(For Regional Office) Requests the Lead Information Officer of Central Office to augment his or her Crisis Communication Team without delay if, after careful evaluation and consultation with his or her team, the Regional Office cannot handle the demands of media and social media, stakeholders, and the public for timely and accurate information. In such a situation, he or she should identify and enumerate the needed augmentation support, whether it is for additional personnel, information, equipment, experts, etc.*



## DUTIES OF INFORMATION FACILITY LIAISON

- Works closely with Lead Information Officer.
- Collaborates and coordinates with Information Gathering Officer, Information Dissemination Officer, Operations Support Officer, and Lead Liaison Officer.
- Helps ensure that needed resources of information center are available — including space, personnel, supplies and equipment, and technical experts.

## DUTIES OF INFORMATION GATHERING OFFICER

- Closely coordinates with the Response Pillar and information officers of other agencies and gathers the latest information.
- Sets up a system that will ensure that information coming from the Response Pillar are rapidly received and collected.
- Interprets Response Pillar's situation reports and meeting notes into appropriate information for release to the public and other response partners.

- Closely works with experts from other agencies to create subject- and situation-specific fact sheets and Q&A's.
- Collects information on other possible public emergency concerns for release when needed, like health, safety, security.
- Supervises the maintenance and updates of media contact lists and logs.
- Supervises media monitoring activities.
- Oversees the production of materials, like fact sheets, press releases, media advisories, social media, website updates, and B-roll video.
- Triage the information required by the media and ensures that their inquiries are attended to in time.
- Surveys and interprets the crisis situation and determines needed messages.
- Identifies concerns and needs that arise from the crisis and response.

### (IMB Director)

- Activates and supervises the emergency response websites and social media.
- Supervises social media monitoring activities and needed website and social media updates.
- Establishes links with emergency response websites of other agencies.
- Supervision of information technology and social media personnel.
- Management of communication systems, including phone systems.
- Management of DSWD's computer servers.
- Management of Internet servers.

## DUTIES OF INFORMATION DISSEMINATION OFFICER



- Main media relations person.
- Evaluates media requirements and orchestrates the means to fulfill those requirements, like press conferences, daily media briefings, social media and website updates.
- Supports and briefs DSWD's spokesperson and spokespersons of other agencies involved in the crisis response.
- Oversees the distribution of materials, like fact sheets, press releases, media advisories, social media, website updates, and B-roll video.
- Serves as liaison between Response Pillar and the Communication Crisis Team; and field representative for media relations.
- Administers the channels for responding to information requests from the public via social media, hotline, email.

## DUTIES OF OPERATIONS SUPPORT OFFICER



- Locates and assigns a space for the Crisis Communication Team operations that is separate from the Response Pillar's operations.
- Locates and assigns a space for media briefings and press conferences.
- Locates a quiet place for training and briefing spokespersons.
- Locates a space for team meetings and conferences.
- Locates and assigns a space for supplies and equipment to be used exclusively by the communication personnel.
- Sees to it that there is enough trained communication personnel that can operate and support the Crisis Communication Team 24/7 to relieve other members, thereby reducing fatigue and mistakes.

- Identifies qualified people who can respond to phone inquiries and questions and comments on social media (Facebook and Twitter) and considers staff from other departments and other partner agencies; or contracting outside social media specialists.
- Explores contracting public relations personnel for the duration of the crisis to augment DSWD personnel.
- Keeps on standby “for emergency use only” all imaginable office supply items from paper clips to pencils and flash drives to printer inks.
- Obtains every equipment possible to be used for communication to media and partners during a crisis, like laptop and desktop computers with secure internet access and loaded with basic softwares and collaboration applications, crisis communication documents, etc.; dedicated landline and hotline phones; communication radios; cell phone chargers and extra batteries; copiers; fax machines; audiovisual equipment; sound systems with microphones; projector and screen; recording devices; TVs; etc.

## DUTIES OF LEAD LIAISON OFFICER



- Main community relations person.
- Main field information officer.
- Sets up communication and coordination protocols with DSWD partners and stakeholders and community leaders.
- Organizes periodic briefings and meetings with partners, stakeholders, and community leaders throughout the crisis to provide information and get feedback.
- Solicits feedback from partners, stakeholders, and community leaders throughout the crisis.
- Responds immediately to questions and information requests of partners, stakeholders, and community leaders.
- Monitors reports from partners, stakeholders, and community leaders and determines misinformation that needs corrections.
- Identifies concerns and needs of partners, stakeholders, and affected communities in relation to the crisis and Response Pillar response.
- Provides needed escorts and facilitates briefings for VIPs and other local or international responders.

***Important: All the functions and components should closely be coordinated and integrated to ensure that messages are consistent.***

# IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

## BE FIRST, BE RIGHT, BE CREDIBLE

The crisis communication plan should be configured to help manage the first 24-48 hours of a crisis and its corresponding intense media and public enquiry.

### High-priority tasks:

## VERIFICATION

- Get the facts
- Find out where information originated and determine credibility
- Question possible rumors or hoaxes, which can be found through traditional and social media
- Find out if information are consistent with other reports
- Assess scope and scale of the crisis; answer questions like, "how much damage?" "how many are affected?" and "how big an area?"
- Begin to identify staffing and resource needs for the expected media and public interest
- Find ways to access additional information



## NOTIFICATION AND COORDINATION

- Immediately notify the Response Pillar leadership and heads of the eleven clusters
- Decide and specify all people who must be notified
- Notification message should only contain verified information



- Coordinate and notify also people who may not be members of the Response Pillar but are partners in response
- Make a log of who were notified, when, how, or if they were not reached

## ASSESSMENT

- Assemble the facts
- What information other agencies are collecting and how is that being compiled?
- What other agencies and organizations are doing to respond?
- Who are affected by this crisis? What do they want and need to know? How can they be reached?
- What should the public be doing?
- What is being reported on the Web and in the media? Activate formal and informal monitoring systems?



- What is being said about the crisis? Is the information accurate? Determine the consistency of information across sources
- What is the potential for the crisis to get worse?
- Will crisis result in more intense public or media interest?
- Have rumors or conflicting information emerged?
- Is the clearance process operating efficiently? How can it be improved?



# ASSIGNMENTS

**Most of the assignments will be predetermined by the crisis communication plan**

- What meetings should communication staff attend?
- What resources are needed and will they be enough?
- Is staffing sufficient or should staffing be reallocated?
- Who is the spokesperson for the crisis and what support might he or she need (e.g., experts as additional spokespersons, additional briefing or training, cultural liaisons)?
- Will communication staff be expected to travel?
- Should the organization reset times for daily updates to the media or cancel the regular updates?
- Should hours of operation be increased or reduced?
- Are supplemental funds needed to meet public and media demand for information?
- Are the crisis communication teams operating with approximately equal effectiveness?
- Are communication contractors support needed?



- Who needs to be alerted?
- What are the audiences' perceptions, backgrounds, and values?
- What are the audiences' immediate and long-term information needs and wants?
- What do media want to know?
- How can the communication team demonstrate empathy?
- What are the facts? What happened?
- What is the Response Pillar's stance on the issue? Are there policies or values relevant to the crisis?
- How is the Response Pillar solving the problem?
- What other agencies or groups are involved and what are they saying?
- What should the public be doing?
- What public information is available and when will more information be available?

## RELEASE OF INFORMATION THROUGH PREDETERMINED CHANNELS

The crisis communication function is about releasing information to key audiences. When information is effectively delivered to the media, the chances of inaccurate reporting are reduced. Anticipate likely media questions, like:

- Who's in control?
- What are you doing for people affected by the crisis?
- Is the crisis under control?
- What should we expect?
- What else can go wrong?
- When can we get more information?
- When talking to the media:
  - Provide only information that has been approved and cleared
  - Never speculate and don't over-reassure

## PREPARE INFORMATION AND GET APPROVALS

**To get information out and fast, the crisis communication team needs to hurdle message research, message development, approval process, and coordination with groups concerned. Several questions need to be answered for approvals:**

- Who are the audiences, both immediate and remote?
- Who have been affected by the crisis?
- Who are upset or concerned?



- Repeat the facts about the crisis.
- Describe what Response Pillar is doing to soften the effects of the crisis.
- Describe what other organizations are doing.
- Explain what the public should be doing.



## GET FEEDBACK AND ANALYZE HOW THE CRISIS COMMUNICATION TEAM DID DURING THE CRISIS

Ask for feedback from key audiences as soon as it is practical to do after a crisis, particularly how the Crisis Communication Team handled the communication.



- Compile and analyze comments and criticisms made by different audiences
- Collect and analyze media coverage and internet activity
- Develop a SWOT report (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) on the operation of the Crisis Communication Team



- Share the results within DSWD
- Identify the changes that have to be made in the crisis communication plan
- Revise the crisis communication plan
- Incorporate changes in the next training and drill exercise

## CONDUCT PUBLIC EDUCATION

Conduct a public education in the local and regional levels affected by the crisis while they are still receptive to information and behavioral change.

- Determine the public's understanding and information needs related to the crisis
- Are there wrong perceptions and impressions that need to be corrected?
- Did the public understand DSWD's messages on crisis? Did the public take appropriate actions? Why?
- Determine if audiences not involved in the crisis should also be targeted for public education
- Should a section be created or updated in DSWD website as a result of this crisis?



## MONITORING

Monitoring should be done throughout the crisis as a feedback mechanism to determine how messages are being received in order to make changes in the general communication strategy, if necessary. Crisis monitoring protocols include:



- Tri-media monitoring (radio, TV, print)
- Internet monitoring, including social media and other websites
- Monitoring of exchanges of information among the eleven clusters, other stakeholders, and partner organizations
- Public opinion monitoring and collection of other relevant information

*Please fill in all template forms for Key Audience Contact List, Media Contact Log, News Release on Pages 75, 76, 77.*

# THE SPOKESPERSON

A spokesperson plays a pivotal role in any crisis communication. In fact, his or her role could easily be the most important one in a crisis situation. He or she is the key human connection – the central figure – in delivering the messages of DSWD and Quick Response Team to various audiences. No person should represent the department and the response team unless he or she has invested a great amount of time and energy in developing his or her skills.

Although he or she is not exclusively responsible for creating the messages, he or she must involve himself or herself in developing those messages to project some kind of ownership of those messages. He or she must fully understand the message and the reasons behind those messages. His or her words and personality should match because he or she is not just the reader of the statement. He or she is the statement.

In any crisis, others can, and should, assist in the spokesperson's role. While the spokesperson is the main messenger, other experts and agency heads can join him or her to provide additional background and answer specific and technical questions.



## SPOKESPERSON'S ROLE IN CRISIS COMMUNICATION

The chief role of the spokesperson is to communicate information the public wants – and needs. People should be empowered by the message he or she conveys. And what he or she delivers and how he or she delivers it should build confidence and trust to calm people and somehow reduce the level of harm during the crisis.

### Before a crisis:



- Coordinate closely with the crisis communication team
- Get all the facts and the Response Pillar's action plan
- Know the public's perceptions
- Listen to what the news media are reporting and asking
- Practice what to say to media based on the key messages
- Go to the scene immediately, if possible

### During a crisis, the spokesperson should be prepared to answer a variety of questions. For example:



- What is the event and its magnitude? (Practically the 5Ws and 1H)
- What are the risks for individuals and communities?
- Who is responding to the crisis?
- What are they doing to respond to the crisis?
- What can people do?

### Things to remember before responding to any question:



- Establish a connection early on with the audience with honest concern and empathy. It increases the odds that the audience will listen and act on the message
- Stay calm when admitting uncertainty
- Don't over-reassure
- Project competence and consistency to help build confidence & trust
- Be honest, open, and transparent
- Show commitment by providing regular follow-up reports, including positive results of the response and the challenges the department is facing
- Keep your promises



# WHAT MAKES A GOOD SPOKESPERSON

Any audience can sense when the spokesperson is self-conscious or merely going through the motions. And most speaker trainings will say, “Be natural” or “Be yourself.” There is nothing wrong with that. The spokesperson just needs to bear in mind the seriousness of his or her role and that he or she represents DSWD, which has an identity. And a character. A better advice would be: “Be like DSWD. Act like DSWD.”

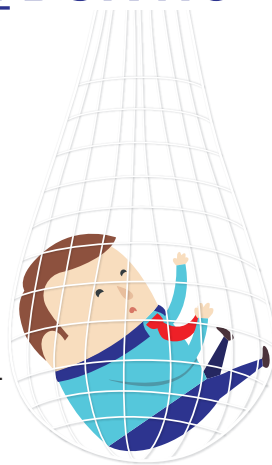
## A good spokesperson:



- Communicates facts about the crisis and what is being done by the response team
- Projects caring, compassion, and empathy that generates goodwill
- Is trustworthy and credible

# SPOKESPERSON TRAPS AND HOW TO AVOID THEM DURING A CRISIS

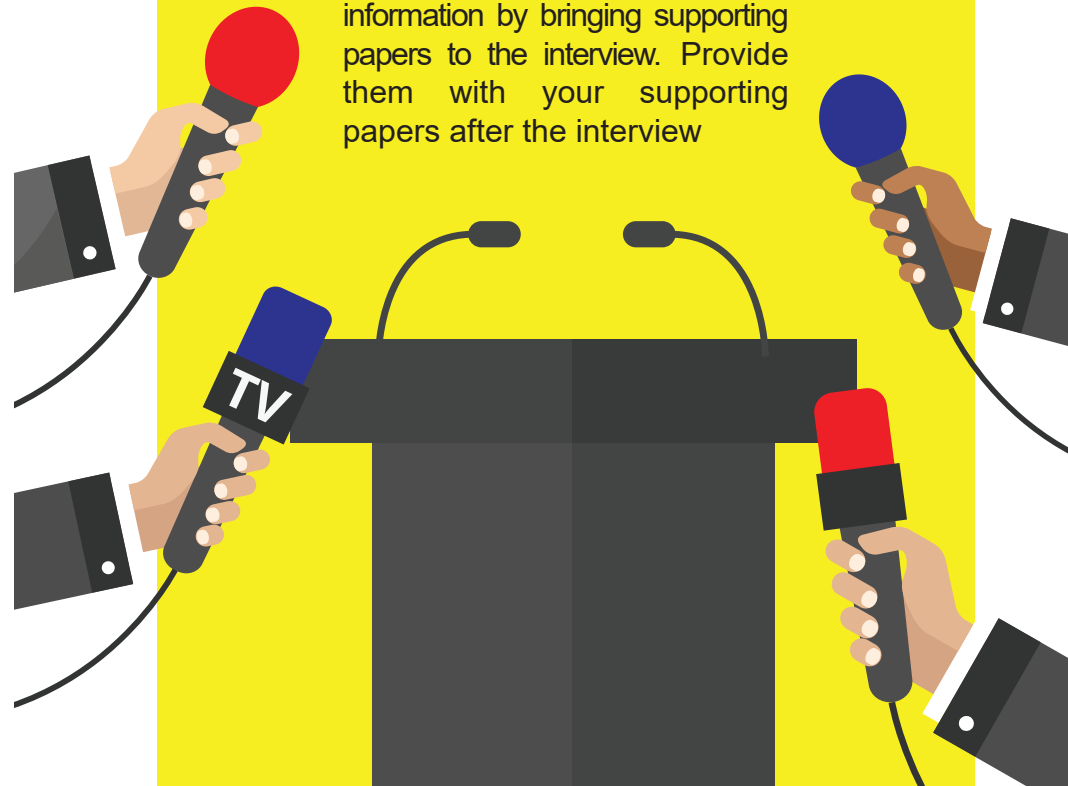
- Avoid jargon and acronyms. It gets in the way of building an audience connection. If using a specialist or technical term, define it
- Use short, simple sentences
- Avoid humor during a crisis. The audience might misunderstand or misinterpret it
- Avoid repeating negative allegations or assertions. Debunk it with positive or neutral words
- Never trivialize what people are experiencing with clichés or frivolous remarks. It destroys credibility



# MEDIA INTERVIEW GOALS AND PITFALLS

## Interview Goals:

- Establish the primary purpose of the interview and identify key messages
- Make sure reporters get the correct name of interviewee and what he or she does. Avoid titles that does not mean anything, like “Chief or Director of Something”
- Help reporters confirm your information by bringing supporting papers to the interview. Provide them with your supporting papers after the interview





## Interview Traps

- The reporter may use emotional words. Avoid repeating them, use your own words. Never let a reporter put words in your mouth
- If you are asked leading or loaded questions, rephrase the question in neutral terms
- If a reporter indicates or certifies he or she has new information, never assume he or she is correct. Say instead, "That's the first time I heard that, let me verify."
- If the reporter keeps the microphone in front of you after you answered his or her question, resist the tendency to repeat your answer or add anything to your answer. Simply say matter-of-factly that that's your answer without annoyance or sarcasm
- Reporters will quote you if they want, including your "off-the-record" statements. Don't say anything in an interview that you don't want published anywhere
- Never answer "no comment" to a question. Simply state why you can't answer the question. It maybe that the department is getting more information, the department hasn't made a decision, or you are not the expert to answer the question
- Anticipate questions and draft answers. Your core message should not be longer than 30 seconds and not more than 90 words
- The interview is not finished until the reporter and his equipment are out of your sight
- Admit if an information is not yet available and make a commitment to get it for them
- Never assign blame
- Never belittle anyone or make critical comments about other agencies
- Focus on what you know and what the department is doing
- Don't get caught in hypothetical questions. Simply address genuine public concerns
- Never speculate
- Record interviews on video or audio and inform reporter that the interview is being recorded
- Never ask reporters to view first their articles or interviews before publishing. If, however, they show a material to you, it means that they expect you to correct errors of facts but not their viewpoints
- Break down multi-part or long questions. And answer each part separately
- Don't bring up issues you don't want published



# PRESSCON TIPS

- ✓ Identify in advance who should answer questions concerning specific issues
- ✓ Have various experts during a presscon or media briefing as part of the team
- ✓ Answers should be short and focused, no longer than 2 minutes
- ✓ Some presscons may be telecast, familiarize yourself with how it's done so you are relaxed
- ✓ Assume that every microphone is live until they are out of sight
- ✓ Assume that all mobile phone cameras and audio recorders are getting what you are saying and doing – and streaming on YouTube

## Interview Tips:

# IN-PERSON INTERVIEW

- Find out who will conduct the interview, the reporters who will be there, and the publication and network they represent
- Know the topics the interviewer wants to cover and limit the questions and answers to those topics
- If the reporter goes off-topic, suggest that you are not the right person to answer the question and tell him or her who is
- Know the format and duration of interview
- Feel free to set a time limit to keep the interview short and focused. But be open to a follow-up interview, if needed
- Ask who else had been interviewed about the topic and who else will be interviewed
- Ask when and where the interview will be available. If still unknown, ask to be notified.



## AVOID

- ✗ Embarrassing or arguing with the reporter
- ✗ Telling the network or publication your preferred reporter
- ✗ Demanding that comments or statements not be edited
- ✗ Asking that a critical individual or group not be interviewed
- ✗ Distorting, coloring, or spinning the truth
- ✗ Demanding that an answer or quote be edited out
- ✗ Stating that the information you are about to reveal is off the record or should not be attributable to you

# TELEPHONE INTERVIEW

- Get the reporter's name, radio/TV or publication he or she represents, phone number, and e-mail before the interview
- Ask to call back the reporter to verify that he or she is indeed who he or she claims to be
- Ask if the interview is being recorded
- Ask when and where the information will be used
- Spell out difficult names, technical terms, and phrases
- Call back if the call was interrupted
- Call back if you need to provide updates

## THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Never point reporters to internet-based or print materials and suggest that they can save time there
- Stand to reinforce your voice. Standing will also make you sound more alert
- Have a written version of core messages in front of you. Repeat them from time to time so that the reporter is made aware that these are the most important points
- Ask reporters for reactions to ensure they understand your key points



# TELEVISION INTERVIEW

Since television is a visual medium, you should always be aware how you carry yourself, including dress, gestures, and facial expressions. Preparation is important.

## THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Avoid unnatural gestures
- Ask for a chair that does not swivel and sit in a straight posture
- Avoid unnecessary movements in the chair
- Don't look at yourself on the monitor. It is distracting
- Look at the reporter, not the camera
- Ensure that the earphone provided by the TV station fits securely so that it will not pop out of your ear. Ask the producer for assistance, if needed
- If the interview is taped, ask to repeat your answer if you think it's not the best or you want to correct a misstatement
- If in a live interview, correct a misstatement immediately



# RADIO INTERVIEW



Radio is a vital communication medium for its immediacy. It is also portable. Reporters usually use handheld recorders, wireless technology, and even cell phones.

## RADIO INTERVIEW TIPS

- Speak in a conversational style
- You don't have a responsibility to fill air time so avoid vocalized pauses such as "uh," "um," and "you know." Take the time you need to answer the question
- If you are taking notes, be conscious of the rustle of papers
- Keep key messages short and focused. Radio interviews are usually also short
- Adopt the audience's viewpoint and level of understanding and avoid lengthy scientific explanations
- Be aware that reporters sometimes repeat the same question many times to get a different answer or a more concise response. When this happens, don't begin your answer with, "As I said before..." as it is possible that the actual audience of the interview did not hear your previous answer to the same question
- Be aware that radio is more community-based and reporters are likely to ask questions from the community's point of view

*Please refer to Pages 78, 79, 80, 81, 82 for other Media Tips and Resources.*

# SPOKESPERSON IN PUBLIC MEETINGS

Public meetings are usually marked by high levels of emotion as most of the audience are the ones directly affected by the crisis – community members, public officials, first responders or the LGU, and members of the local media.

**Intense Emotions and Angry Responses are Likely to Increase During a Crisis When –**



- People are hurt
- People think they are still threatened by the crisis
- People feel helpless in the face of the crisis
- People think and believe they haven't been attended to properly by the government
- People feel used, manipulated, or their suffering played down

**How To Keep Calm And Focused In Emotion-Filled Public Meetings**



- Set the meeting objectives
- Propose ground rules to ensure order
- Pause and take time to frame your responses

- Let the audience know all concerns are being taken seriously
- Be empathetic and try hard to understand the feeling of helplessness of people
- Actively listen to people and resist forming an answer while they are talking
- Acknowledge emotions
- Acknowledge mistakes, then talk about where everyone needs to go in resolving issues
- Offer equal time to dissenting views among those attending – but set limits
- Don't let anyone lecture, including the experts
- If discussion breaks down, point and refer people back to your meeting objectives
- Be calm and don't lose your temper
- Don't be defensive
- Expect criticism and attacks. It's understandable. Practice responding with composure
- If personal, unfair, or abusive comments are thrown at you, respond professionally by calling such behavior inappropriate, then ask the person to join you in getting back to the real issue
- Don't rehash old issues and encourage everyone to look forward

# ASSESSING SPOKESPERSON SKILLS



## A SPOKESPERSON'S SKILLS AND TRAITS

- Thinks quickly
- Delivers messages convincingly
- Tolerates high-stress situations and uncertainty very well
- Structures responses effectively
- Recognizes tough questions instantly
- Paraphrases tough questions tactfully
- Challenges incorrect information in a non-confrontational manner
- Can explain credibly why a question cannot be answered
- Easily handles long and multi-parts questions
- Effectively conveys appropriate level of concern with facial expressions and tone of voice
- Projects credibility, confidence, firmness, and rationality
- Honest and frank
- Sincerely listens to feedback, seeks out advice, and accepts criticism
- Adapts well to any situations
- Remains calm even in a chaotic environment
- Accommodating
- Non-aggressive, yet assertive
- Non-argumentative
- Sensitive to the communication process and the needs of audiences

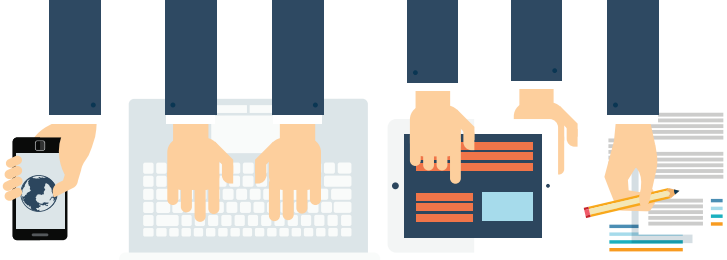
# WORKING & INTERACTING WITH THE MEDIA

In order to establish a collaborative relationship with the media during a crisis, the crisis communication team needs to understand that the media will not be satisfied with just the press releases that the department feeds them. They have an obligation to report facts without bias and they will do whatever it takes to get their work done.

They will look for various sources of information to get alternative viewpoints about the crisis. They will ask questions about a crisis and sometimes very hard questions.

Then, they will decide what to tell their audience.





## MEETING MEDIA NEEDS THROUGHOUT THE CRISIS

During the first critical hours of a crisis, fairness is extremely important. This means providing all media outlets – local, regional, national, international, independent media – with the same access to information at the same time. They all have space and time to fill and deadlines to meet. And the crisis communication team can help provide for these needs by:

- Distributing messages that are vital to the well-being and safety of the public
- Keeping the content of the message consistent across all information channels
- Using teleconferencing or, if that is not feasible, a presscon or press briefing can be employed and all media outlets invited so everyone can participate
- Establishing a schedule for information releases
- Understanding media deadlines and accommodating these deadlines
- Being available 24/7, if necessary, to help them get their facts right before their deadline
- Posting information on DSWD's website
- Utilizing social media

Basically, the questions that media typically ask when a crisis happens include:



- What happened and what is happening now?
- Who is in charge?
- Were the people warned of this event?
- Are there casualties?
- How many? What are their names?
- Are there people hurt? How many?
- Are the people who got hurt getting help? How? What kind of help?
- What else could happen?
- What kinds of danger are the people now facing?
- What is the government/department doing about these risks?
- What should people in the area do?

“ This media assault for information can happen in a matter of minutes after the crisis, depending on the severity or magnitude of the event. They are the most visible and clamorous group that can exert pressure for information in a crisis. And if they don't get the information they need from official channels quickly, they will look for experts and outside authorities who will most likely, and instantaneously, speculate what officials are or should be doing. This speculation will then feed rumors that will require corrections. Giving the media up-to-the-minute and accurate updates can help prevent these speculation and rumors. ”



As the crisis unfolds, media may not operate as they normally do. When this happens the crisis communication team can expect:

Inadequate scientific or technical experts. The crisis communication team should be prepared to fill in the blanks to help the media provide more accurate information to the public.

Less than ideal information verification. Because of the pressure from all fronts for information, the media will broadcast even tentative, or incorrect, information.

Media doing man-on-the-street interviews, especially during the first moments of the crisis. The sooner official news from the department comes out, the less time these personal stories will be given space or airtime.

Media interviewing in-house experts during the initial hours of the crisis to fill the gap. Until the official news from the department comes out, they will continue using their experts.



## HOW TO GET INFORMATION TO THE MEDIA

**1** PRESS RELEASES

**2** PRESSCON & MEDIA BRIEFINGS

**3** PRESSCON BY TELEPHONE

**4** PRESSCON BY WEBCAST

**5** EMAIL

**6** BROADCAST FAXES

**7** WEBSITES & VIDEO STREAMING

**8** RESPONDING TO MEDIA CALLS

**9** SOCIAL MEDIA

**0** TEXT BLAST/ TEXT MESSAGING



# ESTABLISHING RELATIONSHIP & WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

A valuable and usually untapped groups of people that DSWD can rely on for information during a crisis are the community organizations – religious groups, employers or businesses, community leaders, homeowners associations, and educational institutions. These potential partners are familiar, trusted, and influential in the communities and people in a crisis area are more likely to believe them than the media. They know the area and can reach people easily with the needed information and recommended actions.

Initiating and building a partnership with these communities require ongoing interaction and mutual trust. In the pre-crisis stage, the crisis communication team can make an effort to reach out to these communities:

- By signing a MOA that engages the groups as DSWD's information partners during a crisis
- By supplying them with information before and during the onset of the crisis
- By working with them to identify each group's roles and determine the quickest way to reach the target population
- By identifying and developing reliable channels of communication to provide information directly to community leaders and respond to the population's queries
- By touring them to DSWD's crisis facilities
- By including them in crisis drills and exercises
- By briefing them on the crisis protocols of the department, including other local assets, LGU's response responsibilities, emergency warehouses, social media and other local response strategies
- By convening a community forum to share information and seek input



## OTHER COMMUNICATION CHANNELS



Questions that the crisis communication team should ask when determining other information channels:

- Which channels will most likely reach the target audience quickly?
- Which channels will be most appropriate for the audience?
- Which channels will be most accessible considering the specific severity of the crisis?
- Which channels will the audience find most credible?
- Which channels will deliver the message in the appropriate time frame?
- How many channels are practical, considering DSWD's budget and manpower logistics?



# THE ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS



SOCIAL MEDIA



YOUTUBE



FLYERS



# SOCIAL MEDIA

Nowadays, disasters are not only media events but have become social media events, as well. In fact, many people now mainly use social media to get information about a crisis. Some people also rely on social media as their first source of news. And during crises, those who frequent social media sites instantly become involved, especially when it is a major one, their families are affected, or they have friends in the area. They not only look but post large amount of content – pictures, video, comments, updates from official sources through links, and related stories.

## Philippines Social Media Landscape

### PHILIPPINES: SNAPSHOT

JANUARY 2014

**105,720,644**

TOTAL POPULATION



49%

URBAN

51%

RURAL

**37,602,976**

INTERNET USERS



36%

INTERNET PENETRATION

**34,000,000**

ACTIVE FACEBOOK USERS



32%

FACEBOOK PENETRATION

**106,987,098**

ACTIVE MOBILE SUBSCRIPTION



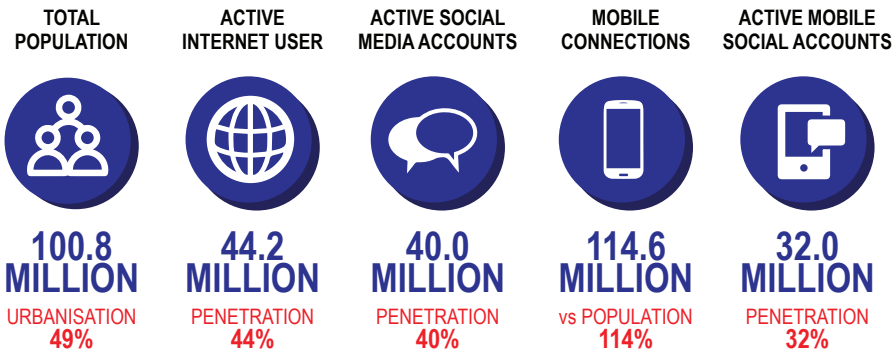
101%

MOBILE SUBSCRIPTION PENETRATION

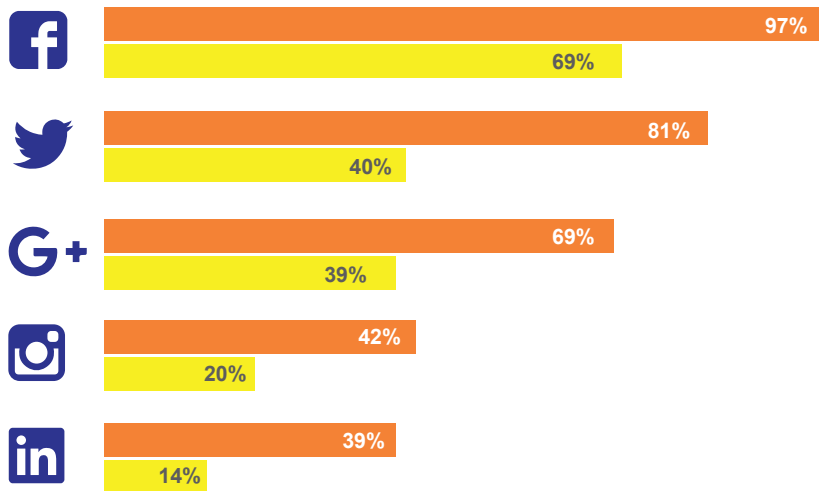
Source: WeAreSocial SG

# DIGITAL IN THE PHILIPPINES

A SNAPSHOT OF THE COUNTRY'S KEY  
DIGITAL STATISTICAL INDICATOR, JANUARY 2015



Source: WeAreSocial SG



Source: WeAreSocial SG

To date, the Philippines has the highest number of social media users in the world, particularly Facebook, and in first place with Argentina for the number of hours spent on the same sites. Active Filipino social media users spend an average of 4.3 hours each day on social media sites.

Other popular social media outlets in the Philippines are Twitter, Google+, Instagram, LinkedIn and, of course, YouTube.

## WORKING WITH SOCIAL MEDIA BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER A CRISIS



### BEFORE A CRISIS

- Launch and sustain a social media engagement as part of DSWD's crisis communication policies
- Know the protocols for sharing information and engaging in a dialogue
- Develop a relationship with social media users way before a crisis happens to build trust
- Use social media as a two-way communication channel where the department can directly communicate with the media, stakeholders, and partners about the looming crisis
- Use it to "listen" to various audiences' concerns
- Use it to track developing issues
- Use it for daily communication activities
- Follow and share messages of credible sources



### DURING A CRISIS

#### Community Partners And Stakeholders Can Use Social Media To:

- Provide on-the-ground information that is critical for situational awareness and response
- Disseminate information
- Create content and visuals
- Assist in connecting people, responders, and information sources

## Social Media Best Practices Include:

- Define DSWD's policy concerning social media – what can and cannot be done
- Respond to posts and provide information promptly to demonstrate that you care
- Respond honestly to questions – with empathy, concern, and compassion
- Use social media to help manage rumors and correcting misinformation
- Check all information for accuracy
- Communicate the uncertainty of a situation
- Explain what DSWD and Response Pillar are doing
- Employ social media as a primary channel for updates
- Ask the people directly affected by the crisis to provide essential information
- Remember that the media are also in and using social media
- Remember that you can have a real human interaction in social media
- Remember that you can offer emotional support to the people in the area
- Provide links to other credible Web resources
- Don't use social media just to post generic communication. It is impersonal



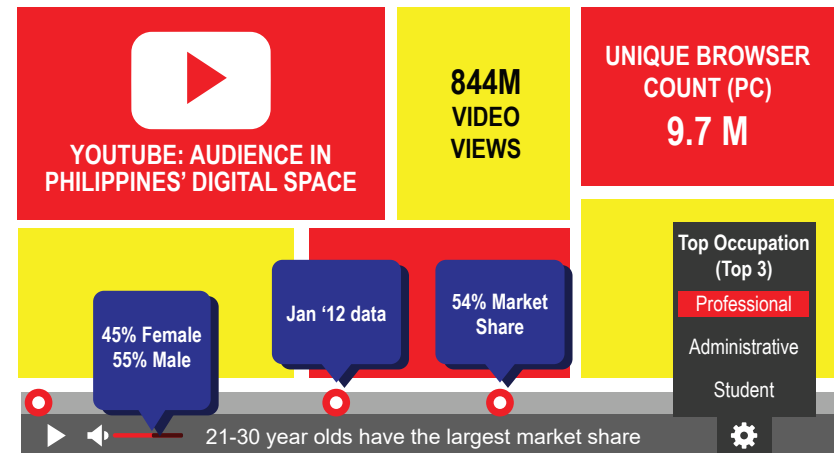
## AFTER A CRISIS

- Update DSWD or DSWD Crisis Communication Team's page and profile regularly
- Continuously post relevant information and updates even after the crisis
- Launch a continuing education campaign on different subjects pertaining to crises

## YOUTUBE

YouTube is another social media outlet that the crisis communication team can and should utilize. Here are the reasons why:

- It's one of the best and fastest ways to send out a video public announcement
- It's the third most popular website in the Philippines, next to Facebook and Yahoo
- Like any social media, you can interact with the audience
- Video is 56 times more likely to show in web searches
- Video is 85 times more likely to be viewed by the audience
- In 2012, 844 million videos were viewed by Filipinos



Source: WeAreSocial SG

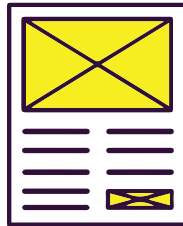
## YOUTUBE AS A CRISIS COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

- Create a DSWD Crisis Communication Channel in YouTube
- Regularly create and upload short, educational video on subjects relating to crises
- Utilize YouTube as a primary channel for video updates
- Upload video releases and statements in relation to the crisis from officials of DSWD and the Response Pillar regarding an impending crisis, during a crisis, and after a crisis

# FLYERS

A flyer is usually a one-page brief statement, which may or may not have graphics to accompany the information. It can be an effective on-site tool for:

- Explaining the potential dangers of the crisis
- Guiding community members in following recommended actions to ensure safety
- Announcing new findings or information
- Public meetings or community gatherings
- Disseminating information when other channels are not available



## FLYER PRODUCTION GUIDELINES

- ✓ Simple, one-page format
- ✓ Should be clear and concise
- ✓ Avoid jargon, acronyms, or technical language
- ✓ If necessary, use the audience's local dialect
- ✓ Clearly identify DSWD
- ✓ Include the date the flyer was released
- ✓ Include contact information for additional assistance
- ✓ Have the contents approved before printing



# ANNEX: CHECKLISTS, TEMPLATES, WORKSHEETS, SAMPLES



## Immediate Communication Response Checklist



Verify the situation and determine the magnitude of the crisis immediately

- Get the facts.
- Who was the source of the information?
- How credible is source?
- Was information obtained from additional sources to put event into perspective?
- Is the information consistent with other sources?
- Is the description of the crisis plausible?
- Was the information clarified through a subject information expert?



Conduct notifications and brief those within and outside DSWD who need to know

- Crisis Communication Team
- Appropriate persons in the department and Response Pillar, including the Secretary, Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, Directors
- Concerned elected officials at all levels
- Appropriate regional and local agencies
- Appropriate national agencies
- Other relevant groups (stakeholders, concerned regional and provincial partners)



### Confirm the degree and intensity of the event to determine the appropriate communication response

- Identify Crisis Level that corresponds to event characteristics
- Establish the hours of operation for the communication team
- Establish jurisdiction over information
- Address the immediate and specific audience concerns



### Activate the Crisis Communication Team and Plan

- Make sure all personnel understand their roles and their immediate tasks
- Make sure each team member has already been given their specific assignments
- Inform and brief all experts and spokespersons
- Brief and prepare all staff in case they are approached by the media



### Prepare information and obtain approvals. Secure agreements on the information content, develop it, and have it approved for release

- Work out schedule for a timely release
- Check all information for accuracy
- Does the message convey compassion?
- Were the specific concerns of various audiences addressed?
- Does the message meet DSWD's standard for good message development?
- Have media questions been anticipated and answers developed?
- Has the message been cleared for release?



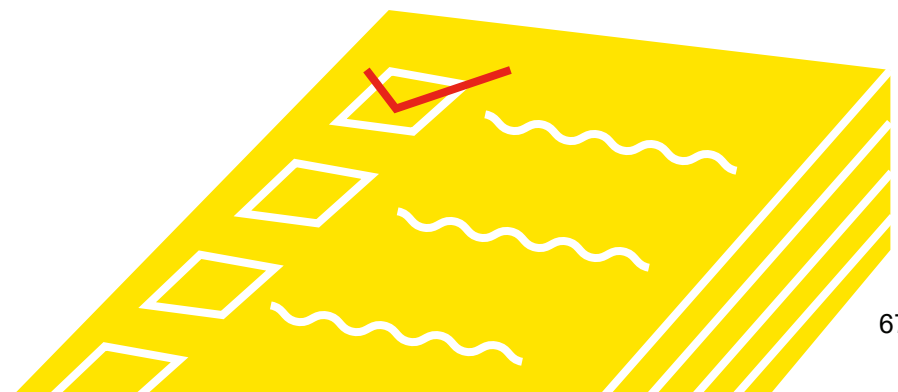
### Decide on frequency of information release, how and where it will be released; who will speak. Release information to the public without delay

- Have you released information as quickly as possible?
- Was the same information given to all media at the same time?
- Was the information released to other groups as planned? (partners, legislators, special interest groups, etc.)
- Was the information released through other channels as planned? (social media, flyers, YouTube, etc.)



### Monitor all information channels and make adjustments for the duration of the crisis

- Regularly update and brief experts and spokespersons
- Continually monitor media coverage to –
  - find out what messages are still needed
  - watch out for rumors and misinformation that need correcting
  - identify concerns and needs of the people and places affected
- Are mechanisms in place to monitor audience feedback (e.g., public information call analysis, social media)?
- Constantly provide feedback to leadership



# Crisis Communication Team

## Lead Communication Officer

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

## Information Facility Liaison

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

## Information Gathering Officer

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

## Coordinaton with various responders and other information officers

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

## Media and Social Media Monitoring & Analysis

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

## Strategy and Messaging

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

## Research & Writing

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

## Audio-Visual

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

## Information Dissemination Officer

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

## General Media Relations

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

## Briefing of Spokespersons

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

## News Conferences Organizing

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

## Status updates

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

**Answering, documenting questions from general public**

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

**Briefing key response leaders and other officials**

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

**Operations Support Officer**

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

**Administraton**

**Facility Support**

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

**Media Reception**

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

**Lead Liaison Officer**

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

**Community Relations**

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

**VIP Escort**

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

**Field information Officer**

Name:  
Phone:  
Cell Phone:  
E-mail:

**NOTE:**

The positions above are for large-scale crises. In reality, and depending on the scope of a crisis, one person can perform many functions; or one position or function can be occupied by several people if the size of the crisis demands it, like Yolanda.

# OTHER HELPFUL CONTACTS

## MEDIA INQUIRIES CONTACT LIST

- Identify individuals/experts from the Response Pillar that media can contact for additional, and maybe technical information, about the crisis.
- Create a Crisis Contacts for Media Inquiries (similar to the one below) that the Crisis Communication Team can send out to media

DSWD    DepED    DOH  
DND/AFP    OCD    DILG    DOST/PAG-ASA

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Personal E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Assigned Responsibility: \_\_\_\_\_

# TALKING POINTS TEMPLATE

This message map has several parts that the spokesperson can tick off during an interview.

- **Audience:** To whom the message is directed
- **Question or Concern:** Issues to address and focus on
- **Key Messages:** 3 key messages that are less than 30 words (or less than 10 seconds each) written in simple, elementary level English for maximum audience comprehension
- **Supporting Information:** Amplifies key messages through additional facts and details. The additional information can be in the form of visuals or citations from credible sources

## TALKING POINTS TEMPLATE

**Audience:**

**Question/ Concern:**

Key Message 1	Key Message 2	Key Message 3
Supporting Information 1-1	Supporting Information 2-1	Supporting Information 3-1
Supporting Information 1-2	Supporting Information 2-2	Supporting Information 3-2
Supporting Information 1-3	Supporting Information 2-3	Supporting Information 3-3



# FIVE-STEP MODEL FOR PREPARING MESSAGES

**RESPONSE SHOULD:**

**BY:**

**Express empathy, compassion, caring, listening**

**1**

- + Using personal pronouns, such as “I” “we” “our” or “us”
- + Indicating through gestures, body language and words that you share the concerns of those affected by events
- + Acknowledging the legitimacy of fear and emotion
- + Using a personal story, if appropriate (“My family...”), and
- + Segueing to the key messages.

**State the key messages**

**2**

- + Limiting total number of words to less than 30;
- + Limiting total length to less than 10 seconds;
- + Using positive, constructive and solution-oriented words as appropriate; and
- + Setting messages apart with introductory words, pauses, inflections.

**State supporting information**

**3**

- + Using three additional facts;
- + Using well thought out and tested visual material, including graphics, maps, pictures, video clips, animation, photographs and analogies;
- + Using a personal story;
- + Citing credible third parties or other credible sources of information.

**Repeat the key messages**

**4**

- + Summarizing and emphasizing the key messages.

**State future actions**

**5**

- + Listing specific next steps; and
- + Providing contact information for obtaining additional information, if appropriate.

# KEY AUDIENCE CONTACT LIST

Determine the department's key audiences – media and the general public, stakeholders, and community partners – that need to be targeted. Revisit this list of potential stakeholders as the crisis evolves to reflect changes in audiences as needed.

## KEY AUDIENCE CONTACT LIST

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Personal E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Responsibility: \_\_\_\_\_

# MEDIA CONTACT LOG

*It is important to track all the media inquiries you receive. During a crisis, make additional copies of this form so you can use one form for every call.*

**Deadline:**

2 hours  Today a.m.  Today p.m.  ASAP  Other

**Media Outlet:**

Local  
 Regional  
 National

TV  Daily/Wire  Radio  Magazine  Other

Caller's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Caller's contact information: Phone(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Action Needed:**

Return call expected  
from press officer

Return call with E-mail  
or fax

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Action Completed:**

Date and time \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time \_\_\_\_\_

**No Action needed; call closed by:**

Question answered

Referred to Internet

Referred to subject matter experts

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Taken by: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: a.m. \_\_\_\_\_ p.m. \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# NEWS RELEASE TEMPLATE

This initial press statement aims to answer the basic questions: what, where, when, who. The statement should likewise provide what guidance and recommendations are possible at this point; express the government's concern; and detail how additional information will be disseminated. The statement should give phone numbers or contacts for more information or assistance. Please remember that this template is meant only to provide guidance. One template will not work for every situation.

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: (name of contact)

PHONE: (number of contact)

Date of release: (date)

### Headline—Insert your primary message to the public

Dateline (your location)—Two-three sentences describing current situation

Insert quote from an official spokesperson demonstrating leadership and concern for victims.

Insert actions currently being taken.

List actions that will be taken.

List information on possible reactions of public and ways citizens can help.

Insert quote from an official spokesperson providing reassurance.

List contact information, ways to get more information, and other resources.

# MEDIA TIPS AND RESOURCES

When confronted with bad news, remember the principles below. These should guide and direct DSWD's crisis messaging — not the other way around:



## MEDIA BASICS

The job of media is to tell all sides of a story. Impartially. Without fear or favor. So don't expect reporters to present only your viewpoint. And never tell a reporter how to report a story. They also have no obligation to make you look good. But you can make yourself look good by providing accurate, clear, concise information.

- **Know who's calling.** When a reporter calls, get his or her name, employer and phone number. Then ask what information he or she is seeking from you.

- **Identify yourself.** Provide your name, title, and department. Never assume a reporter knows who you are or what you do just because he or she called you.

- **Respect deadlines.** Reporters live by deadlines. If a reporter calls for immediate comment and you don't have the facts, point him or her to someone who can provide answer.

- **Respond promptly.** If a reporter catches you by surprise and unprepared, find out what he or she wants to know and offer to call back in a few minutes. Organize your thoughts and response and call back quickly. If you have an interview, be there. Evading a reporter won't make a story disappear. It will run just the same – without your viewpoint.

- **Tell the truth.** Always. If you don't know or you are not sure, say so. Your credibility is at stake.

- **If you don't want something reported, don't say it.** Anything you say to a reporter is fair game. No such thing as "off the record."

- **Avoid no comment.** If you can't comment, explain why. Or say you don't know and offer to find out.

- **Use key points.** Identify the three main points of your message. Then develop three responses that support each point. Work on making your responses not more than 20 seconds.

- **No jargon.** Technical terms are meaningless. Use everyday language and examples, instead. Tell your story in ways that the man on the street can easily grasp.

- **Talk slowly.** Even if the reporter uses a recorder. Talk slowly. And clearly.

- **Keep answers brief.** Just answer the question and stop talking.

- **Don't ramble.** Listen carefully to the question and think about the answer before you talk. Pause to gather your thoughts, if you need to.

- **Summarize.** After responding, summarize your key points. "The things to remember are: 1...2...3..."

• **Be proactive.** Answer the reporter's questions and volunteer information if it will help strengthen your point. Also invite him or her to call back for clarification.

• **Potential pitfalls.** Avoid personal views and speculation. Stick to the facts. Also, never let reporters put words in your mouth and don't repeat inaccuracies even to correct them.

• **Feedback.** It's okay to tell reporters that they did a good job. It's also okay to correct them on a major error. But let go of minor misunderstandings. Remember, you're building a relationship.

• **Don't assume that a reporter knows.** Most reporters are generalists and cover diverse topics and don't have the time to get background information. Provide simple information to help out.

## QUESTIONS MEDIA ALWAYS ASK

- What happened and what is happening now?
- Who is in charge?
- Were the people warned of this event?
- Are there casualties?
- How many? What are their names?
- Are there people hurt? How many?
- Are the people who got hurt getting help? How? What kind of help?
- What else could happen?
- What kinds of danger are the people now facing?
- What is the government/department doing about these risks?
- What should people in the area do?



## QUESTIONS THE CRISIS COMMUNICATION TEAM SHOULD ASK AND ANSWER

- What happened?
- How do we know?
- Who is responsible?
- Why did it happen?
- Who is affected?
- What should we do?
- Who can we trust?
- Who needs to hear from us?
- What should we say?
- How should we say it?



## QUESTIONS YOU DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER

- Questions on Legalities or Negotiations
- Questions on Security
- Questions that require Figures as Answers
- Competitive Questions
- Personal Questions

## IRRELEVANT QUESTIONS

- It is easy for an interviewer to talk about a subject you find irrelevant
- Always refer back to the subject or message goals
- Remember, you are the expert
- Answer briefly and as nicely as you can



# ADDITIONAL TIPS WHEN DEALING WITH MEDIA

## How Media Behave in a Crisis

- Find out about it quickly
- Monitor each other
- Allot extra time and space for coverage
- Go where they want, unless boundaries are set
- Probe for details and more information
- Use their own knowledge, resources, and experience
- Report what they know – quickly and constantly
- Lay blame, perpetuate myths, and report rumors
- Advance the news agenda into speculation, next steps, implications, issues
- Go to where they have access for responses, expert opinions, etc.
- Get suspicious when confronted with silence or 'information vacuums'

## MULTIPLE QUESTIONS



- The interviewer will occasionally ask not one question but several at once
- Answer only questions on topics most important to you

## A OR B MULTIPLE QUESTIONS

- Do not limit yourself to the choices given
- If the proper answer is not contained in those choices simply say so and give the correct answer



## ABSENT THIRD PARTY QUESTIONS



- You never have to and should not answer for someone else
- Establish the fact that you are answering for yourself
- I can't answer for.... Or what I can tell you is....

## RANKING QUESTIONS

- Answer from your perspective



## PERSONAL OPINION QUESTIONS



- Saying your words are your own won't prevent the quote from being identified as coming from the spokesperson of DSWD



## How Should DSWD Respond

- Give the media the correct tools and information
- Make yourself available to the media
- Admit mistakes
- Report your own bad news

# HOW MEDIA FRAME A CONTROVERSIAL NEWS STORY

News is made up of drama, conflict, controversy, emotion and irony. Reporters stereotype and cast characters to tell their story. There is a:



**VICTIM**

The people and the environment



**HERO**

Media or anyone trying to bring out the truth



**EXPERT**

The person or group who described how things should be handled or repaired



**WITNESSES**

Those who saw the situation unfolding



**VILLAIN**

Yolanda



**VILLAGE IDIOT**

The person or group who constantly bungles and makes a bigger mess by taking a defensive and argumentative position.

More often than not, the department is projected as the villain. To prevent this, use the “problem-solution formula” where you admit the problem first then, offer a solution. For example, if you look at a story like the Yolanda tragedy, it’s easy to assign the roles mentioned above.

# HOW TO BE THE HERO IN A CONTROVERSY

In any crisis, messaging can’t always smooth out a tough situation. Your words should also reflect a genuine, heartfelt and authentic concern for the situation. The last thing media and the public want to see is a rehearsed, insincere message.





Deliver stand-alone statements to avoid getting quoted out of context. Keep your messages simple because you don't know which one is going to get used in the story.



Apologize to gain trust. Lawyers often counsel clients about the hazards of apologizing, but it's often the right thing to do in crisis situations. When lawyers control the message, it does little to establish trust in the court of public opinion.



Being upset when bad news breaks is good strategy. Amplifying your emotion and concern enhances your credibility. Facts never win over emotions.



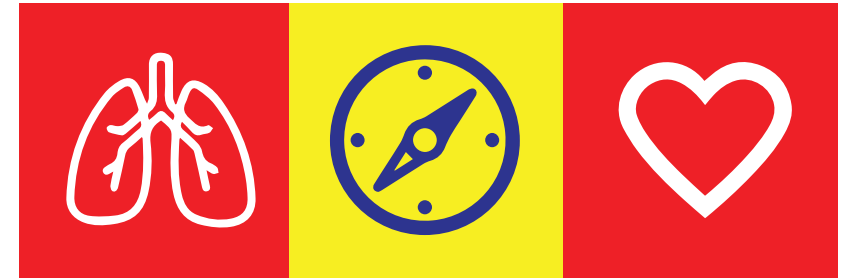
Acknowledge the concerns of the public.



Your tone, body language, and message should all be in agreement if you want to look like you mean what you say.

## WHEN YOU'RE PUT ON THE SPOT

It can be particularly difficult to respond when you are suddenly put on the spot. To control the situation, remember:



To breathe

Your value compass

People need to know, and feel, how much you care

## HANDLING HOSTILITY

The following should help you feel confident and valued

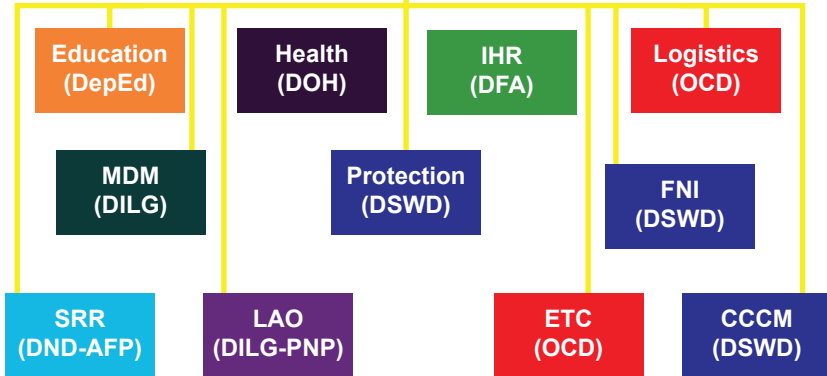
- Remain detached and unemotional
- Pause, breathe in slowly, and answer unemotionally
- When you blow your cool, you put yourself in the hands of the interviewer
- Avoid head-on confrontations
- Try not to be defensive about critical questions. Embrace each question, reflect on it quickly and respond
- You are there to add a particular perspective, to tell a side of the story, to give an expert opinion, and add value in some way



# RESPONSE CLUSTER

**Vice Chairperson for Response (DSWD)**

--- **Operational Coordinator (OCD)**



<b>Education (DepEd)</b>	To ensure safety of learners and DepEd personnel and to provide continued access to quality of education to all affected learner.
<b>Protection (DSWD)</b>	To save lives by providing food and non-food to the affected populations during the emergency response phase in the short-term, and to restore at least the pre-disaster level of food security in the affected areas in the long-term.
<b>Health (DOH)</b>	To ensure effective and predictable health response built on health priorities and related best practices.
<b>SRR (DND-AFP)</b>	To provide support for an effective, timely, organized and systematic search, rescue and retrieval in all emergencies to further minimize loss of lives and casualties.
<b>IHR (DFA)</b>	Establish an organized and systematic management structure for all international humanitarian assistance to the Philippines, e.g., accommodation of search and rescue and disaster relief teams, among others.

<b>LAO (DILG-PNP)</b>	To provide security to the Response Clusters operating in the affected area, traffic management that will facilitate the speedy movement of people, goods and equipment to the affected population and responding agencies; and enforce law and order in the community through the provision of information on the disaster response operations and the maintenance of community policing to reduce or arrest criminality in the area.
<b>Logistics (OCD)</b>	To provide an efficient and effective logistics coordinating structure that will harmonize the activities of all clusters and encourage regular info-sharing among all stakeholders and other partners which covers the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• transportation (emergency road network, land, sea and air),</li> <li>• warehousing,</li> <li>• inventories</li> <li>• tracking of deployed items</li> </ul>
<b>FNI (DSWD)</b>	To provide assistance and augment all requirements for the management and evacuation of families affected by disasters.
<b>MDM (DILG)</b>	To provide assistance in the proper identification and disposition of the remains in a sanitary manner with cautions to prevent negative psychological and social impact on the bereaved and the community.
<b>ETC (OCD)</b>	To strengthen ICT capacities at national down to local level responders to prepare for, respond to and recover from the impacts of disasters.
<b>CCCM (DSWD)</b>	To ensure that protection issues do not arise in emergency situations, respond and mitigate its effect.

*Note: DSWD shall be responsible for responding to the needs of those affected in terms of Food and Non Food Items, Internally Displaced Persons Protection, and Camp Coordination and Camp Management. The other government agencies and departments shall be responsible for their specific mandated tasks before, during, and after any crisis.*





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