

ASEF Public Health Network

Risk Communications for Public Health Emergencies

What to Learn from Real-life Events

2-3 October 2014

Oslo, Norway

BACKGROUND

From 2010 to 2013, the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) Public Health Network implemented the *Accurate Scenarios Active Preparedness (ASEF-ASAP)* project to strengthen multi-sector pandemic preparedness and response. The project utilised a scenario approach to address the uncertainty of future pandemics and to assess the existing pandemic preparedness mechanisms in likely future settings. In this process, a series of workshops engaged experts from health and non-health sectors to develop scenarios, test pandemic preparedness of some selected sectors—human security, passenger air transport and food supply security—and formulate recommendations for those sectors.

Among the recommendations developed from the process, risk communications emerged as one of the common concerns across multiple sectors. In response, the ASEF Public Health Network organised a workshop on *Effective Risk Communication for Public Health Emergencies and the Role of Social Media* in June 2013 in Bali, Indonesia. The workshop brought together communication experts, including government agencies, international organisations, non-governmental organisations, the private sector and the media. The workshop generated several approaches to communicating risks in public health emergencies.

In conjunction with feedback from the workshop participants who supported the value of sharing lessons from real-life public health events, experts who were consulted encouraged ASEF to contribute to strengthening countries' capacities for managing public health events, required by the International Health Regulations (IHR, 2005) and the Asia Pacific Strategy for Emerging Diseases (APSED, 2010). Both of the frameworks address "risk communications" as part of the core capacities and focus areas for surveillance of and response to emerging disease and other public health emergencies. Drawing upon its facilitation of collaboration between health and non-health sectors, ASEF Public Health Network seeks to mainstream risk communications for public health emergencies as a common area for Asia-Europe co-operation in health.

DESCRIPTION

As part of this endeavour, ASEF Public Health Network will organise a workshop *Risk Communications for Public Health Emergencies: What to Learn from Real-life Events*, hosted by the Research Council of Norway, on 2-3 October 2014, in Oslo.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, consequences of public health emergencies have displayed growing demands on communications. As the media environment has been transformed from monopolistic ownership of information and channels by a few authorised parties into creation and consumption of news through interactive platforms by multiple users, how a public health event is communicated has a greater impact than what is done at each phase of management: monitoring, assessment, reporting and response.

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By looking at some selected real-life public health emergencies over the past decade until recent, participants will:

- Evaluate the challenges and capacity needs that impact communications of public health emergencies; and
- Identify the core elements of functional lessons learned from health emergency communications.

Risk communication experts, public health officials or journalists involved in selected public health events shall share their experiences, and participants will evaluate the challenges and capacity needs recognised by different stakeholders in communications for such events. In this process of drawing lessons, participants will identify core elements for the lessons to become useful and functional in future public health emergencies. The objectives will be achieved through presentations of case studies, working group discussions as well as a simulation exercise.

EXPECTED PARTICIPANTS & TARGET GROUPS

- Public health practitioners who have handled emergency events
- Experts & professionals involved in public health campaign
- Representatives from government agencies in charge of health, risk/crisis communications
- Representatives from media
- Representatives from international organisations
- Representatives from NGOs specialised in community health
- Representatives from academia

EXPECTED RESULTS

- E-publication compiling the workshop's proceedings
- Workshop results circulated to the target groups
- Outcome of the workshop used to design follow-up activities

PROGRAMME (to be updated)

Wednesday, 1 October 2014

All day	Participants' Arrival and Check-in
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19:00	Reception
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Thursday, 2 October 2014

09:00	Welcome Remarks tbc, Research Council of Norway Mr Thierry SCHWARZ Director for Political and Economic Department, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)
	Introduction of the Workshop Ms Sunkyoung LEE Project Manager, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)
	Presentations of Case Studies <u>H5N1 and H1N1 in Singapore</u> Dr K. U. MENON Senior Consultant, Ministry of Communications and Information, Singapore
	<u>2011 Christchurch Earthquake</u> Dr Alistair R. G. HUMPHREY Medical Officer of Health, Canterbury District Health Board, New Zealand
	<u>2014 Ebola Outbreak in West Africa</u> Ms Nyka ALEXANDER World Health Organization (WHO) Consultant

13:00	Lunch Break
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14:30	Working Group Discussion
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17:30	End of Day 1
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19:00	Welcome Dinner
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Friday, 3 October 2014

09:00	Simulation Exercise
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12:30	Lunch break
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13:30	Discussion on the Results from the Simulation Exercise
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16:00 Closing Remarks

16:30 End of Workshop

ORGANISERS



The **Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)** promotes understanding, strengthens relationships and facilitates cooperation among the people, institutions and organisations of Asia and Europe. ASEF enhances dialogue, enables exchanges and encourages collaboration across the thematic areas of culture, education, sustainable development, economy, public health, and governance.

Founded in 1997, ASEF is a not-for-profit, intergovernmental organisation located in Singapore. It is the only permanently established institution of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

Together with about 700 partner organisations ASEF has run more than 600 projects, mainly conferences, seminars and workshops. Over 17,000 Asians and Europeans have actively participated in its activities and it has reached much wider audiences through its networks, web-portals, publications, exhibitions and lectures.

For more information, please visit www.asef.org



The **Research Council of Norway (RCN)** is a national strategic and funding agency for research activities, and a chief source of advice and input into research policy for the Norwegian Government, the central government administration and the overall research community. An important objective is to ensure that Norway adequately invests in research and development activity, to identify Norway's research needs and to recommend national priorities. Using targeted funding schemes, the Council helps to translate national research policy goals into actions. Using "bottom up" schemes the Council fosters research of the best scientific quality.

The RCN works to promote high-calibre research and win greater acknowledgement of research as a cultural, value-creating force that fuels social development. A knowledge-based society is dependent on a research establishment that is on the cutting edge internationally. The research Council seeks to strengthen the international position of Norwegian research together with other players in the research system.

Four key challenges

- To enhance the capacity and quality of Norwegian research
- To strengthen research in areas of particular importance for research, trade and industry, and society at large
- To promote constructive cooperation, distribution of responsibility

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and structures in the research system

- To translate research results into action

The RCN covers all subjects' fields and discipline and all kinds of R&D carried out in the higher education sector, institute sector, public sector (hospitals) and industrial sector.

SPONSOR



Government of Japan

CONTACT INFORMATION

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