



GF-TADs

GLOBAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE
PROGRESSIVE CONTROL OF
TRANSBOUNDARY ANIMAL DISEASES



Oie

Standing Group of Experts on African swine fever
in the Baltic and Eastern Europe region

under the GF-TADs umbrella

Eight meeting (SGE ASF8) - Chisinau, Moldova, 20-21 September 2017

**General principles of risk communication
as part of the ASF response**

Ms. Suzanne KERBA
WHO Communication Expert

SOCO

My Single Overarching Communications Outcome

Support your SOCO.

Why am I talking to you today about risk communications?

- *Risk communications are an integral part of animal (and human) health initiatives*
- *Using effective risk communications increases the likelihood of success in achieving your intervention goals*

What is the change I want to see as a result of my presentation today?

- *Motivate you to see risk communications as an important intervention tool*
- *Generate interest and enthusiasm for risk communications practice*
- *Create 'champions' for risk communications in the veterinary community*



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SOCO

Your Single Overarching Communications Outcome

Eradicate ASF.

Why do veterinary services want to stop the spread of ASF?

- *ASF represents a serious threat to pig farmers worldwide.*
- *There are no treatments or vaccines for ASF.*
- *The disease can cause massive economic losses.*
- *The disease has been spreading in Eastern Europe and the EU.*

What is the change veterinary services want to see as a result?

- *An increased awareness of the dangers of ASF among farmers, hunters, transporters, and the general public.*
- *An increase in surveillance and reporting among farmers and hunters.*
- *An increase in practices of ASF prevention*
- *No more introduction of ASF into countries and regions free of disease.*



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How do people communicate?

The different parts of a conversation or information exchange

Source

- *Communicator*

Message

- *Take steps to reduce the spread of ASF*

Encoding

- *Adapting the message to your audience*

Channel

- *How you deliver your message – via media, online, flyers, word of mouth, etc.*

Decoding

- *How your audience interprets your message*

Feedback

- *How your audience responds*

Context

- *The environment in which your message is delivered*

Interference

- *Anything that gets in the way of your message – rumors, misinformation, etc.*

Shannon, C. E. (1948). "A Mathematical Theory of Communication." Bell System Technical Journal **27**(3): 379-423.



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What is Risk Communication?

Risk communication is the real-time *exchange* of information, advice and opinions between *experts or officials and people* who face the threat (from a hazard) to their survival, health or economic or social well-being.

Risk communication is a proper intervention.

- *Done properly, risk communication save lives (animals and humans)*

Risk communication a two-way conversation, NOT a monologue or a directive.

- *Trust, listening, and identification are key elements.*

The **purpose** of risk communication is to help *people at risk make informed decisions* to mitigate – that is, to reduce – the effects of a threat or hazard and, in doing so, take protective and preventive action.



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Best practices for effective risk communications

Create and maintain trust

- *You care about me.*
- *You know and address my concerns.*
- *You are reliable.*

Acknowledge and communicate – even in uncertainty

- *You are not concealing information from me.*

Coordinate your communications

- *You agree with other credible experts.*

Be transparent and accurate with all communications

- *You are telling me the truth.*
- *You are seeking solutions.*

Always include messages of self-efficacy

- *I have an active role in making an informed decision.*

Peters, G. J., R. A. Ruiter and G. Kok (2013). "Threatening communication: a critical re-analysis and a revised meta-analytic test of fear appeal theory." Health Psychol Rev 7(Suppl 1): S8-s31.



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Characteristics of a good communicator



- **Expertise** – *you're knowledgeable; you know what you're talking about*
- **Good character** – *you're trustworthy – honest and open in your communications*
- **Goodwill** – *you express empathy, and you are respectful of people in your audience, how they feel, and what they believe*
- **Identification** – *you communicate with people in a way that makes them identify with you and relate to you.*



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Why do soft skills matter in risk communications?

“Decisions always involve both facts and values, whereas most science communication focuses only on facts. If science communication is intended to inform decisions, it must be competent with regard to both facts and values.”



Dietz T. Bringing values and deliberation to science communication. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America 2013;110 Suppl 3:14081-7



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Characteristics of a strong message

Complete and specific

- *Gives the audience what they need to know to make an **informed** decision*

Relevant

- *Appropriate to the situation; timely*

Concise

- *Short and to the point*

Understandable

- *Encoded (adapted) in such a way that your audience understands it*

Memorable

- *Encoded (adapted) in such a way that your audience remembers it*

Positive

- *Empathetic and encouraging*
- *Courteous and respectful of your audience's culture, values, and beliefs*



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OIE Communications Resources



Reference document: **Chapter 3.3.** **of the Terrestrial** **Animal Health Code**



The recognition of communication as a discipline of the Veterinary Services and its incorporation within it is critical for their operations. The integration of veterinary and communication expertise is essential for effective communication.

Communication should be an integral part of all the activities of the Veterinary Services including animal health (surveillance, early detection and rapid response, prevention and control), animal welfare and veterinary public health (food safety, zoonosis) and veterinary medicine.



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7 C's of veterinary communication

Create trust

- *Operate with integrity and transparency*

Command attention

- *Acknowledge and communicate even in uncertainty*

Create clear messages

- *Lift understanding*

Communicate a benefit

- *Give your audience a compelling reason to act*

Consistency is key

- *Ensure the accuracy of your messages, every time*

Cater to the 'heart' and the 'head'

- *Recognize humanistic needs; show interest and empathy*
- *Support your messages with science and evidence*

Call to action

- *In your messages, give people active steps they can take*



Source: OIE Communication Handbook for Veterinary Services -- 2015



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Tactics of risk communication

- *Word of mouth*
- *Media communications*
- *Reputation management*
- *Institutional communications*
- *Social media*
- *Awareness campaigns*
- *Health promotion efforts*
- *Stakeholder engagement*
- *Partner engagement*
- *Social mobilization*
- *Community engagement*



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Which risk communications tactics are right for me?

Will this tactic help me reach my target audiences?

- *Farmers, hunters, transporters, general public*
- *Am I meeting my audiences where they are? In terms of physical location, and/or in relation to their psychological, cultural awareness, and beliefs?*

What level of impact will this tactic have on my target audience?

- *Does this tactic resonate with them?*
- *Am I using a channel they respect and/or pay attention to?*

Will this tactic advance my goals?

- *Prevent the introduction of ASF into countries and zones free of disease*
- *Build awareness of ASF and its risks*
 - *Signs and symptoms*
 - *Prevention techniques*
 - *Hygiene regulations and practices*
- *Encourage the adoption of mitigation strategies*
- *Enhance biosecurity*
- *Increase reporting by farmers and hunters*



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Goals and Objectives for ASF RC Campaigns

Risk communications goals:

- *Create and sustain an environment that prevents the spread of disease and supports awareness of ASF*
- *Educate farmers, hunters, transporters, and the general public about ASF risks and prevention tactics*
- **Motivate** *audiences to take action against ASF*

Risk communications objectives:

*Give audiences a **reason to care** about the spread of ASF*

- *Animal health*
- *Impact on livelihoods; broader economic impact*

Foster knowledge about ASF, transmission patterns, and risks

- *Increase ASF surveillance and reporting (active and passive) among farmers, hunters, and transporters*



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Where is your audience?

Adapting your communications strategy

Champions	Silent boosters	Avoiders	Blockers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support their efforts• Reward their contribution• Encourage them to share their support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educate, enable, inform and motivate• Energize them through mentorship with champions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inform• Inform• Inform• Encourage• Encourage• Encourage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Combat with facts• Monitor what they say• Pay attention to who is listening to them



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Audience Analysis

“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”

--George Bernard Shaw



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Who are your audiences? What do they need to know?

Farmers

- Signs and symptoms
- Hygiene, reporting and disposal processes
- Potential risks of widespread disease
- Benefits of following guidance (gain frame)
- Consequences of not following guidance (loss frame)
- What they can do to help stop the spread of ASF



Hunters

- Signs and symptoms
- Hygiene and reporting requirements and processes
- Potential risks of widespread disease
- Benefits of following guidance (gain frame)
- Consequences of not following guidance (loss frame)
- What they can do to help stop the spread of ASF

.... and travelers and transporters



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What do we know about farmers?

“Farmers are often the first to recognize and report disease outbreaks, and the education of farmers is a fundamental tool in disease eradication.”

Nöremark M, Lindberg A, Vågsholm I, Sternberg Lewerin S. Disease awareness, information retrieval and change in biosecurity routines among pig farmers in association with the first PRRS outbreak in Sweden. Prev Vet Med. 2009;90:



“The expanding distribution of African swine fever (ASF) is threatening the pig industry worldwide. Most outbreaks occur in backyard and small-scale herds, where poor farmers often attempt to limit the disease's economic consequences by the emergency sale of their pigs.”

Costard, Solenne et al. “Small-Scale Pig Farmers’ Behavior, Silent Release of African Swine Fever Virus and Consequences for Disease Spread.” Scientific Reports 5 (2015): 17074. PMC. Web



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What do farmers see as barriers to reporting?

- Limited concern about ASF
- Lack of knowledge about clinical signs and symptoms
- Lack of knowledge about reporting procedures
- Lack of awareness of ASF spreading in other nearby countries
- Fear of negative impact on their reputations
- Expectation that lab confirmation would take a long time
- Belief they can handle the outbreak themselves



English Pig Farmers' Knowledge and Behaviour towards African Swine Fever Suspicion and Reporting. Guinat C, Wall B, Dixon L, Pfeiffer DU (2016) PLOS ONE 11(9): e0161431. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0161431>



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What do we know about hunters?

*“The community of hunters in most European countries consider hunting not only a hobby, but also a lifestyle and mission. For most of them, it is not just about the joy of the quarry, the kill, or the trophies; it is about the **honor** of being hunters. It is an honor to belong to a group of people associated with nature and its resources.*



--Soňa Supeková

*Vice Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business
Paneuropean University
Bratislava, Slovak Republic*

“Hunters who indicated they do not report the presence of wild boar carcasses frequently attributed this behavior to being unaware of the possibility to report.”

*Vergne, T., Guinat, C., Petkova, P., Gogin, A., Kolbasov, D., Blome, S., Molia, S., Pinto Ferreira, J., Wieland, B., Nathues, H. and Pfeiffer, D. U. (2016), Attitudes and Beliefs of Pig Farmers and Wild Boar Hunters Towards Reporting of African Swine Fever in Bulgaria, Germany and the Western Part of the Russian Federation. *Transbound Emerg Dis*, 63: e194–e204. doi:10.1111/tbed.12254*



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What do hunters see as barriers to reporting?

- Lack of awareness of the possibility of reporting
- Lack of knowledge about how to report
- Level of agreement that a reason for them to report a hunted wild boar is because it shows suspicious lesions of disease
- Reporting is troublesome



Vergne, T., Guinat, C., Petkova, P., Gogin, A., Kolbasov, D., Blome, S., Molia, S., Pinto Ferreira, J., Wieland, B., Nathues, H. and Pfeiffer, D. U. (2016), Attitudes and Beliefs of Pig Farmers and Wild Boar Hunters Towards Reporting of African Swine Fever in Bulgaria, Germany and the Western Part of the Russian Federation. *Transbound Emerg Dis*, 63: e194–e204. doi:10.1111/tbed.12254



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Barriers to communicating with the general public

- Uneven levels of scientific literacy
- Lack of a clear understanding of ASF risks
- Lack of a clear understanding about how ASF impacts them
- Lack of awareness that the salami sandwich they threw away at the picnic area could cause illness in pigs
- Lack of awareness that boars like salami sandwiches



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Appeal to the hearts of the general public

Inescapable truths:



- Wildfires can be a threat to humans and animals.
- Wildfires can burn homes.
- Wildfires can destroy the homes and habitats of animals.
- You = Shared responsibility for wildfire control

Inescapable truths:



- ASF causes healthy pigs and boars to get sick and die.
- ASF can destroy the livelihoods of farmers who grow the food you eat.
- You = shared responsibility for ASF control.



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How do we use RC to help overcome barriers?

- **Promote the adoption of positive behaviors (gain frame)**
 - What benefits are there for me?
- **Use formative communications research in design and planning**
 - What do I know about my audiences? Who are they? What motivates them?
- **Focus on homogenous population groups**
 - Target and segment your audiences
- **Have multiple executions of messages**
 - Three times – Curiosity, recognition, decision

*Snyder, L. B. (2007). Health communication campaigns and their impact on behavior. J Nutr Educ Behav, 39(2 Suppl), S32-40.
doi:10.1016/j.jneb.2006.09.004*



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How do we use RC to help overcome barriers?

- **Have a high frequency of exposure to messages**
 - Communicate with your audiences frequently
- **Use multiple communications channels**
 - Identify the channels that speak to your audiences
- **Use integrated approaches (build partnerships)**
 - Build relationships with campaign champions and like-minded groups
- **Provide opportunities for audience feedback and evaluation**
 - Risk communications is a two-way street
 - Evaluation informs your future risk communications campaigns

*Snyder, L. B. (2007). Health communication campaigns and their impact on behavior. J Nutr Educ Behav, 39(2 Suppl), S32-40.
doi:10.1016/j.jneb.2006.09.004*



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Stigmatization

- **Characteristics of stigmatization**
 - The problem is something that the stigmatizer believes he can control
 - *Someone who stigmatizes a farmer whose pigs have contracted ASF believes that he can control an outbreak himself*
 - The problem must be distinguishable (not everyone has the problem)
 - The problem provokes a reaction that places distance between people
 - *Social context: Your pigs got sick; mine did not.*
- **Role of risk communications**
 - Balance REAL risk with needless association of one person or identifiable group
 - Take an ACTIVE role in dispelling misconceptions
 - Correct faulty assumptions

Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control Crisis and Emergency Risk Communications



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What is behavior change theory?

- **Guides formative research**
 - Identify target audiences (farmers, hunters, transporters, public)
 - Understand their motivations
 - What are the determinants of their behavior?
 - How do they perceive your message?
 - What do they see as barriers to making change?
- **Sets goals and objectives**
- **Determines messages and channels**
 - Meets people where they are
- **Helps evaluate**
 - Process
 - Outcome



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Communications Theory: the Health Belief Model

Perceived susceptibility	Do I really face any risk because of African Swine Fever?
Perceived severity	Is ASF really as bad as veterinary authorities say it is?
Perceived benefits	If I take action, will the results be as good as they say?
Perceived barriers	What's the downside? Is ASF prevention a pain?
Cues to action	What's it going to take to get me to move or take action?
Self-efficacy	Can I really be successful at what I'm being asked to do?

Jones, Christina L. et al. "The Health Belief Model as an Explanatory Framework in Communication Research: Exploring Parallel, Serial, and Moderated Mediation." Health communication 30.6 (2015): 566–576. PMC



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Communications Theory: the Stages of Change Model

Construct	Where people are in their decision-making process	Communications change strategies
Pre-contemplation	Is ASF really a risk to me?	Increase awareness of the need for change; personalize information about risks and benefits
Contemplation	They recognize a risk; they think about taking action	Motivate; encourage making specific plans
Preparation/ determination	Ready to get ready; they need help in doing so	Help with the development of concrete action plans
Maintenance	Stick to ASF guidance over time	Reinforcement; problem-solving; social support
Relapse	They fall back into earlier behaviors and actions	Reminders, encouragement



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Creating a risk communications plan

- **OIE's Communication Handbook for Veterinary Services**
 - Creating talking points
 - Communicating with media
 - Combatting rumours and misinformation
 - Helping 'blockers' and 'avoiders' and 'silent boosters' become 'champions'



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Next steps for creating your risk communications plan

- Establish a risk communications planning team
 - *Include national and community-level stakeholders*
- Identify goals and objectives of the plan
- Choose your target audiences
 - *Farmers*
 - *Hunters*
 - *Transporters and general public*
- Develop your key messages
 - *Different messages for different audiences*
- Select your communications channels
 - *Written and oral communications*



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Communications Resources

OIE Communications Handbook for Veterinary Services

• http://www.oie.int/fileadmin/home/eng/Media_Center/docs/pdf/EN_Guide_de_Communication_FINAL.pdf

OIE African Swine Fever Fact Sheet

• <http://www.oie.int/doc/ged/D13953.PDF>

• **OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code: Infection with African Swine Fever**

• http://www.oie.int/index.php?id=169&L=0&htmfile=chapitre_asf.htm

• **ASF – Stop COST action**

<https://www.asf-stop.com/>

• **ECDC: A literature review on effective risk communication for the prevention and control of communicable diseases in Europe**

<https://ecdc.europa.eu/sites/portal/files/media/en/publications/Publications/risk-communication-literary-review-jan-2013.pdf>



A Field Guide to Designing a Health Communication Strategy (JHU)

• http://www.thehealthcompass.org/sites/default/files/strengthening_tools/Field-Guide-to-Designing-Health-Comm-Strategy.pdf

• **WHO Online Course: Risk Communications Essentials**

<https://openwho.org/courses/risk-communication>



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Questions?

Thank you!



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