

**WORKING MEETINGS FOR DEVELOPING THE NATIONAL OPERATIONAL
COMMUNICATION PLAN AND ITS SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR AVIAN AND
PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE**

**ECD, Guyana
January 26–28, 2010**

Avian and Pandemic Influenza Communication Strategy for LAC
Contract Number: GHS-I-10-03-00037-00, Order No. 10

Trip Report

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**Submitted by Links Media, LLC to USAID
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About Links Media

A full-service communications company, Links Media provides organizations with an array of technologies and methods to influence behavior, communicate risk, and mobilize resources to generate positive change. Links Media's services include market research, strategic communications, multimedia production, partnership building and advocacy, and knowledge dissemination. Currently, Links Media provides expert consultation services to the United States Agency for International Development in support of the development and implementation of an avian and pandemic influenza communication strategy and collateral material development for the Latin American and Caribbean region.

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- Dr. Leslie Ramsammy, Minister of Health of Guyana;
- Dr. Zoila Fletcher Payton, from the Pan America Health Organization in Guyana; and,
- Peg Marshall, from the United States Agency for International Development, for her foresight, vision, support, and valuable contribution which has allowed us to successfully work multisectorially, testing new approaches and strategies to ensure collaboration, sustainability, and effective response from our country partners.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AI	Avian Influenza
A(H1N1)	Influenza virus A(H1N1)
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency from Guyana
GDF	Guyana Defense Force
H5N1	Avian influenza virus
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MINTIC	Ministry of Tourism, Industry, and Commerce
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture from Guyana
MOE	Ministry of Education from Guyana
MOH	Ministry of Public Health from Guyana
MOLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development
NPCSC	National Preparedness Communication Subcommittee
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PI	Pandemic Influenza
GRCS	Guyana Red Cross Society
SOPS	Standard Operating Procedures
TA	Technical Assistance
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UG	University of Guyana
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Background

Project

Since 2003, a growing number of human H5NI (avian influenza, or AI, virus) cases have been reported in Asia, Europe, and Africa; most of these cases are believed to have been caused by exposure to infected poultry. If the virus evolves such that it is capable of sustained human-to-human transmission, a pandemic could begin. Preparing for and responding to a pandemic requires coordinated actions and communications by all levels of government and all segments of society. To address this need, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), through its 16 missions in the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region and its government partners, is working with host governments to raise awareness and plan for a potential influenza pandemic, and to coordinate international preparedness and response measures.

Links Media provides expert consultation services to USAID in support of the development and implementation of AI and pandemic influenza (PI) communication strategy and collateral material development for the LAC region. These services are essential in supporting USAID's overarching goal of successfully containing the H5N1 virus within the animal population over the next 24 months. The recent human-to-human spread of the A(H1N1) virus has highlighted the need for operational preparedness and response resources to lessen the devastating effects of a pandemic. Additionally, development of a comprehensive communication strategy and accompanying collateral materials for the region has become pivotal in preparing for an outbreak or a possible human pandemic. The communication strategy specifically provides a conceptual framework and sound operating principles for increasing awareness among key target audiences (particularly backyard farmers, consumers of poultry, healthcare and veterinary staff, municipality officials, and families) of high-risk behaviors for contracting AI, practical preventive measures, and how to recognize, respond to, and, in humans, treat AI. The strategy also provides tools to support the implementation and monitoring of the proposed communication interventions to ensure full utilization by the LAC countries.

Such tools also support USAID's Avian and Human Pandemic Influenza Response Unit in assisting missions and regional bureaus effectively achieve two broad objectives: 1) Strengthen capacities to rapidly detect and respond to the current AI problem in animals and humans; and 2) Continue preparing for a possible human influenza pandemic.

Developing the Operational Plan of Communication

As part of this initiative, Links Media will provide technical assistance (TA) in order to develop the country's Operational Plan of Communication. As the country is implementing the activities from the Operational Plan, Links Media will observe procedures and outcomes, and periodically monitor the progress and maturity of the Plan. Updates to the Operational Plan will be the responsibility of the countries and will be shared with their partners.

Purpose of the Trip

On January 23-30, 2010, Sandra Sánchez and Debora B. Freitas López of Links Media traveled to ECD, Guyana, to facilitate the development of Guyana's national Operational Communication Plan for AI/PI preparedness and response. These working meetings were held with members of the National Preparedness Communication Subcommittee (NPCSC) who are representatives of the country's ministries of health (MOH) (including the public and regional hospitals, and the national public health laboratory); agriculture (MOA); education (MOE); tourism, industry and commerce (MINTIC); local government and regional development (MOLGRD); as well as the University of Guyana (UG); Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); Guyana Defense Force (GDF); Red Cross Society (GRCS); United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); Pan American Health Organization (PAHO); and Media Association (MTV News, NCN News).

The objectives of the trip included:

1. Sharing the experiences, lessons learned, and best practices related to the communication and the crisis management planning efforts for the pandemic influenza outbreak of A(H1N1) in Guyana.
2. Reviewing, analyzing, and enhancing Guyana's current national communication strategy for avian and pandemic influenza preparedness and response plan through the use of tools (i.e., templates, checklists, etc.). These tools will help to identify gaps and provide recommendations based on the actual communication lessons learned from the A(H1N1) pandemic outbreak.
3. Providing TA and guidance to the NPCSC in developing the country's Operational Plan of Communication that will include:
 - National- and sector-level Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) with communication flowcharts, operational instructions designating the responsible, executing organizations and individuals, and roles and functions of each sector and Subcommittee member according to the Operational Plan;
 - A Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan and timeline for testing, validating, and updating the communication strategy and Operational Plan; and,
 - An NPCSC work plan for implementing the Operational Communication Plan and strategies.
4. Progressing on the development of the national Operational Communication Plan by anticipating scenarios in different sectors that might result from AI outbreaks of different kinds in Guyana.
5. Fully preparing the strategy for operation by designating responsible organizations and individuals, developing timelines, and determining resource requirements.
6. Developing a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan and timeline for testing, validating, and updating the strategy and Operational Plan.
7. Identifying further TA needs.

Scope of Work

The scope of work for Links Media included the following specific activities:

- Brief/debrief USAID/Guyana officials as requested.

- Lead and facilitate the working meetings with the members of the NPCSC who are representatives from the MOH (including the public and regional hospitals, and the national public health laboratory), MOA, MOE, MINTIC, MOLGRD, UG, EPA, GDF, GRCS, UNICEF, PAHO; and Media Association (Guyana's MTV News, NCN News) in order to develop the national Operational Communication Plan for AI/PI, and make operational the Subcommittee's plan for PI-related activities.
- Meet with authorities from Guyana's MOH.

Source of Funding for the Trip

This trip was supported through the PI budget.

Trip Activities

Prior to the Working Meeting

In preparation for the working meeting, Links Media conducted various activities, which can be summarized as follows:

- Reviewed Guyana's existing *Risk Communication Plan for coping with the threat of and possible outbreaks of Avian Influenza and the Human Pandemic Influenza*.
- Followed a methodology to improve the current communication strategy and create a more comprehensive, ready-to-implement document and prepare for its operation, should the need arise.
- Prepared for the working meeting. Activities included briefing meetings with the Guyana/USAID Mission representative, Edris George (who represented Matthew Nims), and the Guyana MOH representatives: L. Ramsammy, Minister of Health, S. Persaud, Chief Medical Officer, and N. Butts, Public Relations Officer of the Subcommittee and Coordinator of the Social Mobilization Unit. The agenda was to review the purpose of the visit and the activities of the working meeting.

During the Working Meeting

During January 26 through 28, 2010, the Links Media team held the three-day working meeting in the Grand Coastal Hotel Plantation Le Ressouvenir in ECD, Guyana, with members of the NPCSC. (Please refer to Annex 1 for the working meeting agenda.) Follow-up meetings with key NPCSC members as well as officials of USAID and the MOH were also held. The working meeting can be summarized as follows:

- Representatives from the MOH (including the public and regional hospitals, and the national public health laboratory), MOA, MOE, MINTIC, MOLGRD, UG, EPA, GDF, GRCS, UNICEF, PAHO; and Media Association (MTV News, NCN News) participated in the working meeting. (Please refer to Annexes 2 and 3 for the lists of the participants and media present during the meeting, respectively.)
- Several presentations on different topics, ranging from an introduction to the tabletop exercise for reviewing and evaluating the current existing *Risk Communication Plan for coping with the threat of and possible outbreaks of Avian Influenza and the Human Pandemic Influenza*.

- Links Media lead the working meeting with the NPCSC to develop the national Operational Communication Plan, including SOPs, M&E Plan, and Work Plan.
- Links Media used the methodology for completing the assessment tools in order to identify gaps in the communication plan as well as to compile the information to operationalize the existing communication plan, and develop an M&E Plan, and Work Plan.

Key Findings

- The NPCSC recognized they do not have the decision-making authority to enact the Plan in their sector.
- Most of participants had not yet been officially informed that they are members of the NPCSC.
- Links Media further refined the technical tools used to facilitate the TA provided to Guyana. The team obtained valuable feedback about the assessment tools used to obtain key information to develop the Operational Communication Plan. The team was able to see which tools needed to be made easier to use or understand. Assessment Tools used and improved were:
 - **Checklist 1:** Operational Communication Plan Initial Evaluation
 - **Checklist 2:** Standard Operating Procedures Evaluation at National Level of the Operational Communication Plan
 - **Checklist 3:** Standard Operating Procedures Evaluation at Sector Level of the Operational Communication Plan
 - **Checklist 4:** Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan by Sector and at the National Level
 - **Work Plan:** Communication Subcommittee by Sector and at the National Level
 - **Annex 1:** Contact Information of Communication Channels in the Country
 - **Annex 2:** Resources and Equipment Available for the Response, Before, During and After Possible Outbreaks of Pandemic Influenza
- The Links Media team obtained valuable information to use for the country in order to begin the first draft template of the Operational Communication Plan, including SOPs, M&E Plan, and Work Plan.
- The Links Media will continue to provide TA to the country to further develop the first draft of the Operational Communication Plan to the NPCSC. Virtual meetings, teleconferences and one-on-one phone calls will help to further refine and polish the communication strategy, SOPs, M&E Plan, and Work Plan.
- The Links Media team found the methodology and assessment tools used be appropriate for the working meeting, particularly when used with small groups (2-3 persons per sector) and with key persons. The tools provide a quick way to obtain information necessary to develop the Operational Communication Plan.
- The Link Media team found that it was helpful and expeditious to partially fill out the assessment tools in advance. Including basic information, when known, on the assessment tools provide more time to discuss other tools or points to consider.
- The Links Media team discovered that the country had additional documents related to the National Plan and the Communication Plan. Some of these documents were provided during the working meeting and will be used to develop the first draft template mentioned above.

Others were mentioned but were not provided and therefore could not be used to develop the first draft template.

- Although some of the components within the exercises could not be addressed by the representatives who participated in the working meeting because of their limited knowledge/awareness of the issue-at-hand, the representatives were still able to provide valuable information that could be used to develop the first draft template of the Operational Communication Plan, including SOPs, M&E Plan, and Work Plan.
- The Links Media team felt that the attendees at the working meeting were collaborative, committed, and task-oriented. The meeting would have been more effective if each sector had been represented by two representatives. During this working meeting, some sectors lacked representation while others provided several persons.
- The team determined that the resulting communication strategy products will help to develop an operational plan for avian and pandemic influenza communication.
- The new methodology also was successful in:
 - Providing limited but essential background information to the country in order to identify gaps in the AI/PI communication plan. This information, which was included in the communication strategy, helped to identify the future needs.
 - Effectively guiding participants to think strategically, rather than randomly, about communication as a result of its sequence (e.g., from identifying A(H1N1) communication lessons learned to identifying gaps, strategies, and communication objectives to identifying communication interventions [audiences, messages] to identifying operational details such as responsibilities and resources).
 - Working in partnership with the country ensured an efficiently developed process for operationalizing the national communication plan. The proven templates, materials, presentations, lesson learned, and best practices, based on experiences from past TA in other countries, have resulted in a strategy that is thorough, economical, and practical. ***Subsequently, future work in other countries is expected to be easier and less expensive.*** Additionally, having a degree of standardization among participating countries' communication strategies will facilitate regional and subregional South–South TA and cooperation.
- Participant evaluations were positive. The complete results of evaluation questionnaires provided by participants can be found in Annex 4.

Conclusions

- The working meeting provided Guyana's NPCSC with the opportunity to review, evaluate, and identify gaps for improving the existing national communication plan, and the information necessary to get their plan ready to respond in a timely and appropriate way during an avian or pandemic influenza situation.
- Based on Guyana's experience, some refinements will be made to the methodology used for future TA and training activities in other LAC countries, including:
 - **Incorporating more time for the working groups.** The third and final day, in particular ("operationalizing the strategy"), did not offer enough time for the participants to complete all of the analyses required. Four days, rather than three, is recommended for these types of working meetings.

- **Emphasizing the importance of selecting the most appropriate participants and grouping them effectively.** In order to ensure that the analysis process occurs quickly and effectively, it is important to emphasize to the lead agency the benefit of ensuring that those who participate in the working meetings are key decision-makers and/or their second-in-command. Otherwise, information or processes necessary for developing the operational communication plan and its supporting documents may not be available or developed during the working meeting. Additionally, it is important that the lead agency understands the role of each participant in order to ensure that they are assigned to the most appropriate working sector group.
- **Emphasizing the importance of reference documents.** In order to ensure that the analysis process occurs quickly and effectively, it is important to emphasize to the lead agency the benefit of compiling and providing all available national, sector and communication plans, either in final or in draft form. Otherwise, meeting participants will not have all of the information necessary to develop the operational communication plan and its supporting documents.
- **Emphasizing the importance of projecting resource requirements.** Participants needed assistance in quantifying resource requirements, particularly for Phase 6 of crisis communication interventions. Instructions and samples of illustrative budgets should be included to the agenda for future working meetings.
- **Including more partners.** The strategic design process would have benefitted from additional representation by other sectors such as security (police), private enterprise, and community groups.
- **Emphasizing the importance of M&E.** It is recommended that a greater emphasis be placed on the use of M&E and rapid appraisal tools prior to the implementation of an communication effort.

Recommendations

- Based on the work conducted during this trip, Links Media recommends maintaining the established relationship and continuing the provision of TA to the NPCSC in order to develop the Operational Communication, SOPs, M&E Plan, and Work Plan.
- Creation of subcommittees/working groups for coordinating and monitoring NPCSC efforts is also key to the Committee's success. As part of the monitoring process, a timeline should be developed and maintained in order to monitor the progress of their actions.
- Once the Operational Communication Plan is finalized, Links Media recommends using this plan as an example for other LAC countries. In addition, the technical assessment tools will be adjusted, based on feedback received from the NPCSC members, to ensure effective use with other LAC countries.

Annex 1: Agenda of the Guyana Working Meeting

AVIAN AND PANDEMIC INFLUENZA WORKING MEETING Developing the Operational Communication Plan

National Preparedness Communications Subcommittee
Georgetown, Guyana

January 26 - 28, 2010
Grand Coastal Hotel
Plantation Le Ressouvenir
ECD, Guyana
592-220-1091

Working Meeting Objectives:

1. Review the *Risk Communication Plan for coping with the threat of and possible outbreaks of Avian Influenza and the Human Pandemic Influenza* (hereon Communication Plan).
 - a. Identify lessons learned and best practices in communication based on events in Guyana related to the influenza A(H1N1) pandemic.
 - b. Identify recommendations for enhancing the Communication Plan based on the lessons learned and best practices.
2. Develop a detailed outline of the Operational Communications Plan, including the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan.
3. Develop a draft work plan for the Communications Subcommittee.

DAY 1: TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2010

Expected Result:

1. Review Communication Plan.
2. Establish a list of recommendations for enhancing the Communication Plan.
3. Information compiled for the SOPs within the Operational Communication Plan.

TIME	TOPIC	DURATION
8:30-9:00 a.m.	Registration.	30 minutes
9:00-10:00 a.m.	Welcome and Meeting Opening. Authorities and invited guests: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Leslie Ramsammy, Minister of Health• Dr. Shamdeo Persaud, Chief Medical Officer• Matthew Nims, Health Officer, USAID/Guyana• Dr. Kathleen Israel, WHO/PAHO Guyana Representative• Debora B. Freitas López, Director of Integrated Marketing Communications, Links Media	1 hour
10:00-10:15 a.m.	Break.	15 minutes
10:15-10:30 a.m.	Introduction to the Working Meeting: Agenda, objectives, guidelines, and expected results.	15 minutes

	Facilitator: Debora B. Freitas López, Links Media.	
10:30-10:45 a.m.	Presentation: <i>Risk Communication Plan for coping with the threat of and possible outbreaks of Avian Influenza and the Human Pandemic Influenza.</i> Presenter: Nadine Smith, Health Promotion Officer, World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization	15 minutes
10:45-11:00 a.m.	Presentation: <i>Communication lessons learnt and best practices from influenza A(H1N1) in Guyana.</i> Presenter: Sabella Yussuf, R.Ph., Health Promotion Coordinator, Ministry of Health	15 minutes
11:00-11:15 a.m.	Presentation: Elements of a Communication Plan. Presenter: Debora B. Freitas López, Links Media	15 minutes
11:15-11:45 a.m.	Working Tables: Exercise #1: Development of Recommendations Based on Lessons Learned and Best Practices by Sector.	30 minutes
11:45 a.m. -12:15 p.m.	Working Table Reports: Exercise #1.	30 minutes
12:15-1:15 p.m.	Lunch.	1 hour
1:15-1:30 p.m.	Presentation: Consolidated Recommendations for the Communication Plan.	15 minutes
1:15-1:30 p.m.	Presentation: Elements of the SOPs for the Operational Communication Plan.	15 minutes
1:30-3:00 p.m.	Working Tables: Exercise #2: Development of the SOPs for the Operational Communication Plan by Sector.	1 hour 30 minutes
3:00-3:15 p.m.	Break	15 minutes
3:15-4:30 p.m.	Working Tables: Exercise #3 (cont.) at the National Level.	1 hour 15 minutes
4:30-4:45 p.m.	Conclusion/End of Day 1.	15 minutes

DAY 2: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2010

Expected Results:

1. Information compiled for the SOPs within the Operational Communication Plan.
2. Information compiled for the M&E Plan within the Operational Communication Plan.
3. Information compiled for the Work Plan for the National Preparedness Communication Subcommittee.

TIME	TOPIC	DURATION
8:30-8:40 a.m.	Review of Day 1. Facilitator: Debora B. Freitas López, Links Media.	10 minutes
8:40-9:20 a.m.	Working Table Reports: Exercises #2 &3.	40 minutes
9:20-9:35 a.m.	Presentation: M&E Elements and Methodology for the Operational Communications Plan. Presenter: Debora B. Freitas López, Links Media.	15 minutes
9:35-9:50 a.m.	Break.	15 minutes
9:50-10:50 a.m.	Working Tables: Exercise #4: Development of the M&E Plan by Sector.	1 hour
10:50-11:20 a.m.	Working Table Reports: Exercise #4.	30 minutes
11:20 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	Working Tables: Exercise #5: Development of the M&E Plan at the National Level.	1 hour 10 minutes
12:30-1:30 p.m.	Lunch.	1 hour
1:30-2:00 p.m.	Working Table Reports: Exercise #5.	30 minutes
2:00-2:15 p.m.	Presentation: Elements for the Subcommittee Work Plan.	15 minutes

2:15-2:45 p.m.	Working Tables: Exercise # 6: Development of the Communications Subcommittee Work Plan by Sector.	30 minutes
2:45-3:15 p.m.	Working Table Reports: Exercise #6.	30 minutes
3:15-3:30 p.m.	Break.	15 minutes
3:00-3:30 p.m.	Working Tables: Exercise # 7: Development of the Communications Subcommittee Work Plan at the National Level.	30 minutes
3:30-4:00 p.m.	Working Table Reports: Exercise #7.	30 minutes
4:00-4:15 p.m.	Turn in USBs w/ M&E Plans, Work plan, etc.	15 minutes

DAY 3: THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2010

Expected Results:

1. Draft Operational Communication Plan, including SOPs and M&E Plan.
2. Draft the National Preparedness Communication Subcommittee work plan.

TIME	TOPIC	DURATION
8:30-8:45 a.m.	Review of Day 2. Facilitator: Debora B. Freitas López, Links Media.	15 minutes
8:45-9:45 a.m.	Working Table: Checklist #1: Operational Communication Plan.	1 hour
9:45-10:00 a.m.	Break.	15 minutes
10:00-11:00 a.m.	Working Table: Checklist #2: SOPs at the National Level.	1 hour
11:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.	Working Table: Checklist #3: SOPs by Sector.	1 hour
12:00-1:00 p.m.	Lunch.	1 hour
1:00-1:45 p.m.	Working Table: Checklist #4: M&E Plan at the National Level.	45 minutes
1:45-2:30 p.m.	Working Table: Checklist #4: M&E Plan by Sector.	45 minutes
2:30-2:45 p.m.	Break.	15 minutes
2:45-3:45 p.m.	Working Table: Checklist #5: Work Plan.	1 hour
3:45-4:00 p.m.	Country Information Channels, Resources and Equipment. (Appendix 1 and 2)	15 minutes
4:00-4:15 p.m.	Group Discussion: Conclusion, Agreements, and Next Steps.	15 minutes
4:15-4:30 p.m.	Official closing. Presenter: Dr. Shamdeo Persaud, Chief Medical Officer	15 minutes

Annex 2. List of the Meeting Participants

NAME	INSTITUTION	POSITION	ADDRESS	EMAIL	PHONE
Melanie Allicock	Social Mobilization Unit, Ministry of Health	Communication Specialist	Georgetown	walkintopost@yahoo.com	600-6005
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NAME	INSTITUTION	POSITION	ADDRESS	EMAIL	PHONE
Nazim Hussain	Social Mobilization Unit, Ministry of Health	Community Mobilization	Georgetown	lumisan1963@gmail.com	227-8683
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Collin James	Veterinary Public Health Division Ministry of Health	Director	Georgetown	carverjass@yahoo.co.uk	222-5643 619-7262
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Aleta Peterson	Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development	Public Relations Officer	Georgetown	aletapeters@yahoo.com	226-5071-3
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Carlton Semple	Guyana Defence Force	Civil Defence Commission	Georgetown	semplecarlton@yahoo.com	609-7014
Sylvia Sinclair	Regional Health Authority	Senior Health Visitor	Georgetown		444-6707/ 5525/0257
Nadine Smith	Pan American Health Organization	Health Promotion Advisor	Georgetown	smithnad@guy.paho.org	225-3000
Natasha Smith	NCN News	Reporter	Georgetown	rs_bita@yahoo.com	227-1566
Ashok Sookdeo	Environmental Health Unit Ministry of Health	Director	Georgetown	asookdeo@yahoo.com	621-3778
Sabella Yussuf	Ministry of Health	Coordinator Health Promotion	Georgetown	sabella.yussuf@gmail.com	226-8448
George Watkins	Environmental Health Unit Ministry of Health	Graduate Management Trainee	Georgetown	Gwatkins.gy@gmail.com	654-3984

Annex 3. List of Media Present during the Meeting

AGENCY	CHANNEL	REPORTER(S)	TELEPHONE NUMBERS		EMAIL
			OFFICE	MOBILE	
Capitol News	7	Nadine Luthers	227-8289	592-692-0089	nluthers@yahoo.com
Chronicle	Print		227-5204	592-613-5376	Vk_narine@yahoo.com
Guyana Times	Print	RAVENA GILDHARIE	227-0704	592-653-0001 592-648-8017	Ravenag87@gmail.com
Kaieteur News	Print	Sharmain Cornette	225-8465/91	592-686-9926	f.haniff@hotmail.com
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Annex 4. Participants' Evaluation Results of the Guyana Working Meeting

Developing the Operational Communication Plan Working Meeting
National Preparedness Communication Subcommittee
Georgetown, Guyana
January 26 to 28, 2010
Grand Coastal Hotel
Plantation Le Ressouvenir
ECD, Guyana

Participants completed the evaluation form during the second half of the last day of the working meeting. **Twenty-seven** of the **30** participants who were part of the meeting responded. Of the 27 participants, **14** responded anonymously and **13** included their names.

Date: January 28, 2010

Participant Name (optional): _____

A. Workshop Design Components					
	I strongly agree	I agree	Neither Agree/Nor Disagree	I disagree	I strongly disagree
1. The objectives of the workshop were clear to me.	13 (48%)	13 (48%)	1 (4%)		
2. The agenda of the workshop was well organized.	14 (52%)	13 (48%)			
3. The contents of the workshop were relevant to my job.	13 (48%)	9 (33%)	4 (15%)	1 (4%)	
4. I have learned useful information and skills for my job.	16 (59%)	8 (30%)	3 (11%)		
5. The pace of the workshop was appropriate.	8 (30%)	15 (56%)	1 (4%)	2 (7%)	1 (4%)
6. The facilitators were well prepared.	23 (85%)	4 (15%)			
7. Active participation was encouraged.	20 (74%)	7 (26%)			
8. The materials used were appropriate.	20 (74%)	7 (26%)			
9. We accomplished the objectives of this working meeting.	15 (56%)	12 (44%)			

Please note: For Sections B, C, and F. the responses have not been organized in any priority. However, the responses have been grouped based on content trend and reflect responses by all participants.

B. What would you improve? How?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants selection (2) • Reinforce daily purpose and overview of the intended outcome of the workshop (2) • A slower pace (5) • Lengthen workshop duration (1) • A group leader for each exercise (1) • Validation of the participants feedback at the table (1)

B. What would you improve? How?

- More examples to guide work **(1)**
- Cross referencing between activities **(1)**
- Meals **(1)**
- Nothing **(5)**
- No answer **(6)**

C. What was most useful? Why?

- Methodology and tools **(14)**
 - The creation of situations and the tools to accomplish the situation.
 - The SOP, checklist, and valuable tools to guide the thought processes.
 - Filling out the various exercises. They would assist in designing a very good sector plan.
 - All of the exercises.
 - Structure and checklist in developing SOPs. I am glad I had the checklists; the flow chart makes the process cleaner.
 - How the SOP works and why it is necessary to have and stick to it. Knowing how a committee works and how important the spokesperson's job is because if the right information is not communicated then there would be confusion.
 - Doing the exercise was useful. It helped me have a better understanding in dealing with the question related to SOP.
 - Learning to put together an SOP and an M&E Plan because these are critical areas that were neglected before.
 - Formats for SOPs as they can be used in other sectors. (i.e. Education FPRP) (Promise to acknowledge source!)
 - Putting everything into perspective and in one place. While quite a lot is done maybe there is room for improvement for having formal arrangement for disaster preparedness. The SOP and M&E were important.
 - Working out of the M&E Plan. The developing of the M&E plan, it will be useful in every work program to assess and help to plan activities.
- Facilitators **(2)**
 - The entire tool and how it was so simple to use. Facilitator's involvement in the process of compiling worksheets.
 - The feedback sessions between facilitator and participants were very useful since it allowed broader perspective on relevant issues.
- Participant materials **(3)**
 - The materials that were put together in the binder. Even if you did not make it in the beginning, you could have still followed it, and the material can be used to explain to others.
 - The binder is informative and well organized.
 - That a source materials given was most useful as it assisted in executing designated tasks and also provided much needed information on the subject matter.
- No answer **(3)**
- All the steps of communications in case of pandemic. All of them very new to me. **(1)**
- All aspects were useful since it would put ideas into the mind of those who operate the newly created health communication unit. It can ensure a fully functional and effective unit. **(1)**
- Presenting the national example, and then allowing the workgroups to work on the sector. **(1)**
- I think everything was useful because without proper communication and planning, nothing could be achieved. **(1)**
- The new information. It highlighted the gaps in our Plan. **(1)**

D. How would you describe your role in avian/pandemic influenza response? (Please mark the response that is most appropriate.)

Role in avian/pandemic influenza	#	%
Public health and/or Health care [(3) education, (1) communication in government sector]]	15	56%
Science and Research [(1) public health and/or health care, (1) education]	3	11%
Education	0	0%
Business	0	0%
Communications in the _____ sector [Health, Public (Central to Regional)]	5	19%
Journalism or Public Relations (Education and UNICEF Emergency focal point, XX and Public Awareness)	2	7%
Other. Please specify _____	2	7%
TOTAL	27	100%

E. How long have you been involved in issues related to avian/pandemic influenza response? (Please mark the response that is most appropriate.)

Years involved in issues related to avian/pandemic influenza response	#	%
Less than 1 year	12	44%
1 year to less than 3 years	24	15%
3 years to less than 5 years	5	19%
5 years to beyond	16	22%
TOTAL	27	100%

F. Additional comments.

- Thank you very much to the facilitators; they were excellent. They allowed me to take to my region valuable information.
- For such a packed program, where the inputs made and the workshop will be used, in the making of roles and guidelines, a longer time span should be given to the course. For example: a 1 week duration would have tremendously made a greater impact.
- Much needed workshop. I hope that the tools provided will be incorporated into the drafting/reviewing process of subsequent plans.
- This process would be useful for the UNICEF Suriname + TAT offices. As these come under the Guyana Office administratively, have best could they be briefed?
- I strongly recommend that more time be allowed for training such as this.
- This workshop has been very informative and educational. I have xxx new skills which I will share with my co-workers.
- A very productive workshop. Great Job. Thank you very much for your hard work.
- Very good working meeting. Follow up is essential to the development of the final product.
- Most of the approaches in the workshop were good. At some times, however, groups need to come to their own realization rather than being spoon feed.

Additional comments (continued)

- We would like to see follow-up and the final document being reviewed by all.
- The workshop should have tested for one week where we could have cleared up some issues that we did not have consensus on.
- Although I really enjoyed the workshop and I think that the facilitators were well informed and organized, I thought that the pace of the sessions was too fast.
- The facilitators did an excellent job of assisting the working groups to understand all of the concepts outlined in the workshop.

Annex 5. Selected Photographs from Guyana



Photo: Sandra R. Sánchez, Links Media

The people of Guyana have the opportunity to buy fresh local fruits and vegetables through the different street markets around the country. Communicating efforts to contain an influenza pandemic must be targeted in places where people gather and which are important sources of revenue and sustenance for the population of Guyana. Photo taken near Georgetown, Guyana, on January 24, 2010.

Photo: Sandra R. Sánchez, Links Media



A PI might spread quickly through children and could disrupt the community's school system – children and youth are audiences that can remain contagious for longer periods. In this January 28, 2010 photo, taken in Georgetown, students walk home after classes finished.



Photo: Personnel of the Ministry of Health of Guyana

On January 25, 2010, the Links Media team held several meetings with representatives from the Guyana Ministry of Health. The visits were to debrief the authorities about Links Media’s TA activities to the country, including the working meeting. In the photo, from left to right, are: Debora B. Freitas López and Sandra R. Sánchez, Links Media; Nicola Butts, Public Relations Officer of the National Subcommittee of Communication and Coordinator of the Social Mobilization Unit of the MOH; Dr. Leslie Ramsammy, Minister of Health of Guyana.

Photo: Sandra R. Sánchez, Links Media



Dr. Leslie Ramsammy, Guyana’s Minister of Health, speaks during the opening session of the Avian Pandemic Influenza Working Meeting – Developing the Operational Communication Plan, on January 26, 2010, at the Grand Coastal Hotel, Plantation Le Ressouvenir, ECD, Guyana.



Photo: Sandra R. Sánchez, Links Media

Representatives from MOH and Links Media debrief the participants during the opening of the Avian Pandemic Influenza Working Meeting. The speakers thanked everyone for the TA provided by Links Media, and emphasized the importance of the meetings and the expected results. Pictured from left to right are: Dr. Shamdeo Persaud, Chief Medical Officer of the Guyana Ministry of Health, Dr. Leslie Ramsammy, and Debora B. Freitas López, on January 26, 2010.

Photo: Sandra R. Sánchez, Links Media



Debora B. Freitas López from Links Media, speaks to the meeting participants on January 26, 2010. Also shown from left to right are Dr. Shamdeo Persaud and Dr. Leslie Ramsammy.



Photo: Sandra R. Sánchez, Links Media

On January 26, 2010, members of the national media of Guyana (TV and print) attended and covered the opening ceremony of the Avian Pandemic Influenza Working Meeting – Developing the Operational Communication Plan. For the news coverage attained, please visit the Pandemic Influenza Website: www.influenzalac.org.



Photo: Sandra R. Sánchez, Links Media

On January 28, 2010, Links Media representative Debora B. Freitas López was interviewed by Nazim Hussain, Channel 65 reporter for the show “News Update,” about the Avian Pandemic Influenza Working Meeting – Developing the Operational Communication Plan. Freitas spoke about the TA being provided to the country through the support of USAID.



Photo: Sandra R. Sánchez, Links Media

Representatives from Guyana’s MOA, MOH, and EPA work with Links Media’s representative on information for the agri-health environment sector. This was one of the components for the national Operational Communication Plan. From left to right: George Watkins, Roger Astwood, Nicola Butts, Dominique Saheed, Collin James; and, standing up, Debora B. Freitas López from Links Media.

Photo: Sandra R. Sánchez, Links Media



Petal Gordon, Suelle Findlay-Williams and Dionne Browne report on their results from one of the PI communication planning exercises. Representatives from Guyana’s MOE, MOH, and UG composed this working table, which worked on information related to the education sector.



Photo: Sandra R. Sánchez, Links Media

The Links Media team worked with the participant from Working Table #3, which had to take the role of the disaster management sector. From left to right: Carlton Temple, Debora B. Freitas López, Gabriel Hussein, and Aleta Peterson.



Photo: Sandra R. Sánchez, Links Media

Working Table #4 included representatives from the public and regional hospitals, as well as the national public health laboratory. These participants worked the hospital sector information for the national Operational Communication Plan. At the table: Lilliam Amat, Priya Bhagwandin, Angelina D^e Costa, Balram Doodnauth, Tracey Duncan, and Alero Proctor.



Photo: Sandra R. Sánchez, Links Media

Above are representatives from the MOH (Working Table #5), working on information for the health sector-specific components for the national Operational Communication Plan during the working meeting. From right to left: Nazim Hussain, Shaniece Criss, Marcia Palttoo, Lisa Prashad Ramsarup, and Sabella Yussuf.



Photo: Sandra R. Sánchez, Links Media

Working Table #6 consisted of representatives from the international agencies sector, including members from PAHO, GRCS, and UNICEF. From right to left: Nadine Smith, Owen John, Lydia Fraser, and Ian Jones.



Photo: Sandra R. Sánchez, Links Media

Members of the NPCSC who are representatives of the country's ministries of health (including the public and regional hospitals, and the national public health laboratory); agriculture; education; tourism, industry and commerce; local government and regional development; University of Guyana; Environmental Protection Agency; Guyana Defense Force; Red Cross Society; United Nations Children's Fund; the Pan American Health Organization, and Links Media.