

# Key Message Guidance Package for the EVD Outbreak in Liberia

Social Mobilization Sub-Committee

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## PURPOSE OF GUIDANCE PACKAGE

This guidance package compiles current facts and key messages about the Ebola outbreak in Liberia to inform activities designed to raise awareness, mobilize communities, and promote safe behaviors to stop the spread of Ebola in Liberia.

**The purpose of this guidance package is to provide government agencies, response committees and teams, media outlets, partners, and community leaders with accurate and consistent information to use for when communicating about Ebola in Liberia.** All are encouraged to share this document widely as a guide for all communicating about Ebola.

The messages should be adapted to audiences and into Liberia's local languages and vernaculars as they are shared through local community networks and organizations. Monitoring of audience response for effectiveness and needed refinement is encouraged.

These messages are based on WHO technical guidance and have been adapted for Liberia through the Ministry of Health Social Welfare (MOHSW) and partners working as part of the Social Mobilization Subcommittee.

This document will be reviewed every 2 weeks (or earlier as required), updated and distributed as new information becomes available. All updates from the previous edition will be in **red**.

Feedback on messages should be provided to the Social Mobilization Sub-Committee chaired by Rev. Sumo and the message development working group. Please direct all feedback to the following: [jsumo2013@gmail.com](mailto:jsumo2013@gmail.com); [gebleezeon@yahoo.com](mailto:gebleezeon@yahoo.com); and [sclayton@unicef.org](mailto:sclayton@unicef.org).

## REQUESTS FOR MESSAGES AND APPROVAL OF COMMUNICATION MATERIALS

New messages are developed to support response priorities. Requests for new messages should be submitted in writing that includes a point of contact, desired key behaviors, and relevant technical information.

If your organization is developing communication materials such as posters, radio jingles, videos, training manuals, etc, please submit the materials along with the Communication Review Form at the end of this document for review to the Social Mobilization Subcommittee. This process is to ensure that all messages and materials are consistent with on-going response efforts.

Anticipated return time is within a 1 week period. Approved materials will be marked with the Healthy Life Logo.

**To request review and/or rapid field testing of materials, please complete the form in the last page of the document and submit it to the above mentioned contacts with a copy of the materials.**



## RISK REDUCTION AND PREVENTION

- We can only end Ebola in Liberia if we work together. Do not forget, this thing not finished yet! We must continue our prevention measures.
- 1 case of Ebola is too many. It started with 1 case and has taken the lives of more than 2500 Liberians. As long as there is 1 case, all of us must continue to be careful and protect ourselves, our families, and our communities! We must continue until there are ZERO cases!
- If we relax while Ebola is still here, it can continue to attack our people and our culture. Let us stay strong and kick Ebola out of Liberia.
- Ebola is real, but you can protect yourself, your family, and your community. Together we can stop the spread of Ebola!
- If you want to protect yourself, your family and your community from Ebola you can:
  - Learn the signs and symptoms of Ebola
  - Learn the different ways Ebola is spread
  - Learn how Ebola is not spread
  - Learn how to protect yourself and your community
  - Continue to protect yourself, your family, and your community until Ebola is finished

### Learn the Signs and Symptoms of Ebola

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- Know the signs and symptoms of Ebola. If someone has a fever that starts quick-quick with any of the other signs, do not wait, call 4455 for free and tell your community leader.
- The signs and symptoms of Ebola look like other sicknesses like malaria and typhoid. Ebola can come with fever that starts quick-quick and with weakness, headache, body pain, sore throat, vomiting, running stomach, rash, red eyes, and/or bleeding from the nose or mouth.
- Once you catch Ebola, it can take 2-21 days before it starts to show on you (before signs show). Ebola can spread from one person to another as soon as the signs start to show.

### Learn the different ways Ebola is spread

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- Any person, from any country, household, religious group, or culture can catch Ebola.
- Ebola is spread person to person through body fluids of a **person who is sick with or has died** from Ebola. Body fluids are things like: blood, poo-poo, pee-pee, vomit, sweat, tears, and man and woman business.
- Ebola enters the body through your mouth, nose and eyes, or small cuts or openings in the skin. When we touch a person that is sick with Ebola to help them or touch the body of a person that has died with Ebola we can easily spread it to ourselves. We can also spread it to others by touching them after touching someone sick with Ebola.

- The body of a person that has died with Ebola can spread the sickness quick-quick and to plenty people. Even though the body is dead, Ebola is alive and can spread easily to anyone that touches the dead body.
- You can catch Ebola if you use a dirty razor blade at a barber shop that has been used on someone that has Ebola, or if you get an injection with a dirty needle that has already been used on someone that is sick with Ebola.
- You can also catch Ebola if you are cut in a traditional or a burial ceremony with a knife that has been used on someone who is sick with Ebola. **Only use knives, blades, or needles that have NOT been used on other people. Make sure any kind of thing you are using on your body is clean.**
- Ebola is spreading in Liberia person to person. Ebola can also be spread from animals to people through body fluids of an animal that has Ebola. It is spread from animals to people when we cut, clean, or eat bush meat. You may not be able to tell that an animal has Ebola when you kill it or find it in the forest.

#### Learn how Ebola is *not* spread \_\_\_\_\_

- Ebola is spread by the body fluids like blood, poo-poo, pee-pee, vomit, swat, and spit. Ebola does not live in dirt, water, or air.
- Ebola is not spread by mosquitoes, vaccines, witchcraft, or curses.
- You cannot get Ebola by talking to people, walking in the street or shopping in the market.

#### Learn how to protect yourself, your family and your community \_\_\_\_\_

- You can protect yourself by always washing your hands with soap and clean water.
- You also protect yourself when **you keep a distance** from sick people, their personal things, or their blood, vomit, poo-poo, pee-pee, sweat or spit. Do not touch them! Call 4455 for help and tell your community leader.
- You also protect yourself when you do not touch, bathe or bury anyone who has died. **Even though this is not our normal way, this is one of the best ways to make sure we end Ebola in Liberia.**
- Keep a distance from the personal things that the person touched when he/she was sick, or clean their blood, vomit, poo-poo, pee-pee, sweat, or spit. **Do not touch or use these things!**
  - After you call 4455, a trained team will burn or spray them with strong chlorine water .This will keep you, your family and your community safe.
  - The house, latrine, and area the sick or dead person was using must be sprayed with strong chlorine water by a trained team. Call 4455 for help and tell your community leader.

#### Continue to protect yourself, your family and your community until Ebola is finished! \_\_\_\_\_

- **All of the difficult and new things we are doing like the good hand washing, keeping a distance from sick people; calling for help; allowing safe burials of our loved ones; welcoming survivors- are working, but Ebola is still not finished yet.**
- **We can only end Ebola in Liberia if we work together. Do not forget, this thing not finished yet! We must continue our prevention measures.**

- 1 case of Ebola is too many. It started with 1 case and has taken the lives of more than 2500 Liberians. As long as there is 1 case, all of us must continue to be careful and protect ourselves, our families, and our communities! We must continue until there are ZERO cases!
- If we relax while Ebola is still here, it can continue to attack our people and our culture. Let us stay strong and kick Ebola out of Liberia.
- We can learn about Ebola and help the people in our families and our communities understand what to do to stop the spread and stay safe.
- We can talk to our local political and community leaders to find ways to tell your community about Ebola and to bring the community together to take actions that will keep everyone safe. For example:
  - Find community members that are part of local response teams or that have been trained to help and give correct information
  - Decide ways that the community can help if someone is sick or needs to stay home because of quarantine, so families do not feel rejected and the communities feel safe. Some examples are: bringing food or water to the door; or calling them on the phone so they do not feel so alone; letting them know you are praying for them
  - Decide to make community watch teams or support teams
  - Make a plan on how to care for orphans or children in need until psychosocial teams can find a good home for them
- Talk to INGOs and local NGOs to know what services are available: who has been trained for example and can help answer questions.
- Talk with community leaders like Chiefs & Traditional Leaders, Imams, Priests, Pastors, women's and youth groups, traditional healers, and community groups about how they can work with you to keep your community free of Ebola.
- Go with mobilizer teams going door-to-door to educate your community on Ebola.
- Talk with teachers about the importance of creating theatre groups and other playful activities that help children learn about Ebola.
- Talk with your neighbors about how you can work together to keep your community safe.

## AVAILABLE CARE SERVICES & CASE IDENTIFICATION

What to do if someone is sick \_\_\_\_\_

- If you or someone in the family is sick, keep them in their own area and keep a distance while calling 4455 for help. Do not hide or run away with sick people – you can spread Ebola this way.

- Ebola time is not normal time. If you see someone who is sick keep a distance, call 4455, and tell them to stay where they are.
- Someone who is sick should not walk or travel. This can spread Ebola to more communities and make more people sick.
- The signs and symptoms of Ebola look like other sicknesses like malaria and typhoid. If someone has a fever that starts quick-quick with any of the other signs, do not wait, call 4455 for free and tell your community leader.
- When you get help sooner, you have more chance to survive Ebola. Don't wait! Call 4455 so they can advise you on your situation.

#### Safe Transportation

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- Ebola time is not normal time. If someone is sick tell them to stay where they are and help them to call 4455 for help. When we travel or transport sick people in cars, taxis, or on motorbikes we can spread the sickness to others.
- If you go to the ETU by yourself, you can spread Ebola to other people. If you need to go to the ETU you should go with the ambulance. Call 4455 and they will advise you on what to do and how to get the help that you need.
- If we want to help someone and keep everyone safe we should call 4455 so an ambulance can carry the sick person safely. The ambulance people have the special clothes and chlorine spray so they can carry the sick person in a way that does not spread the sickness to others.
- If you are in a situation where there is no ambulance and you take the person to the hospital, you and other people that use the vehicle can catch Ebola. When you reach the Ebola Treatment Unit, make sure you talk to the health workers and they spray your car, taxi, or motorbike with chlorine water before you leave. This is to stop the spread of Ebola.

#### Why it is important to call 4455 for a sick person

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- When you get help sooner, your body has a better chance of fighting off Ebola.
- When you get help sooner, you have a better chance of surviving Ebola.
- It is important that you listen to the advice from the 4455 people and follow what they tell you to do because not all of the hospitals or clinics are open or can treat Ebola patients.
- The situation is different in every county, and there are different, different types of health centers, like Ebola Treatment Units (ETUs), Community Care Centers (CCCs), and our usual clinics and hospitals.

- Not all of our usual clinics and hospitals are open or can help people with Ebola. It is also important that everyone gets the help they need with sicknesses that are not Ebola.
- When you call 4455 they can send the help you need for your location, answer your questions, and advise you on what to do.

#### Ebola Treatment Units (ETUs)

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- Ebola treatment units (ETUs) are special and safe health centers that give the best care for Ebola.
- Right now, there is no cure for Ebola. The health workers in the ETU can give treatment for the signs and symptoms of Ebola. Early treatment for the signs and symptoms of Ebola can help the person to survive Ebola.
- At an Ebola Treatment Unit people that are tested and known to have Ebola are kept in their own area so the Ebola does not spread to anyone else.
- The health workers in ETUs wear special protective clothing called PPE (overhaul suits) to keep them safe while they are taking care of the sick people.
- The health workers take good care of the Ebola patients in the Ebola Treatment Unit. Sick people get plenty of food, water, and medicine to take care of pain when they are in an ETU. All treatment is free.
- If your family member is in the Ebola Treatment Unit, you can only visit them from a distance, you cannot enter. This is to make sure that you do not catch Ebola. Some ETUs have special areas where families can safely see in and talk to their relatives. Some will help you to call on the phone. Ask the health care worker to help you talk to your family member.
- It can be very scary for a person to be all by themselves when they are sick. It can help the sick person to remain strong and fight Ebola if their relatives are calling, visiting, and praying for them.
- Many new ETUs are being built so that sick people can get the care that they need and keep families and communities safe
- If someone dies in an ETU, the death is registered and family will be told.

#### Community Care Centers

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- During this time of Ebola, all sick people need to stay in their own area and get the correct kind of care for their problem. The sooner any sick person gets help the better chance they have to survive Ebola or non-Ebola.



- CCCs are care centers where people can get care outside of the home when they are sick. This helps keep everyone safe and makes sure everyone gets care.
- Caregivers in CCCs are trained on how to stay safe and have the protective clothing (overhaul suits), chlorine, and other things that helps them to stay safe when they are giving care.
- Caregivers in CCCs help the sick person by giving medicine for fever, making sure the person has plenty to drink and eat, giving pain medicine, and treating other kinds of problems.
- Caregivers in CCCs work with the ambulance drivers and the nearest Ebola Treatment Unit (ETU) so they can decide the best way to take care of a sick person. If it is safer and better for a sick person to go to an ETU, they will tell the family and an ambulance will transport the sick person to the nearest ETU.
- Remember, if anyone is sick, call 4455 so they can advise you on the best health services and send the help you need for your situation.

#### How to protect yourself and your family while you wait for help \_\_\_\_\_

- It is very important to take steps to keep you and your family safe while you wait for help. **Entire families have gotten sick and died from trying to treat one sick person at home.**
- While you wait for help, keep the sick person in their own area away from others.
- You protect everyone in the house when you give the person their own cups and dishes to use and make sure the person has different place to toilet than the rest of the family. We can give them a bucket that they can vomit or toilet in with small Clorox or chlorine water inside. When the help team comes, they will clean them.
- Only 1 person should give care to the sick person. You can give the sick person plenty of water, tea, juice, coconut water, and soup, but keep a distance so the person does not touch you or flash vomit on you. You can give paracetamol if the person has fever. Only give paracetamol. Other medicines can cause the person to bleed.
- Remember, sick people should be cared for in a CCC, ETU, or health center instead of at home. **Entire families get sick and die from caring for just one person at home.** Call 4455 and talk to your community leader to get help.
- **If you must** care for a sick person because you are in a situation where there is no help, you can get sick. There are some steps you can take to reduce the chance that you will catch Ebola or spread it others. **Make sure you find a person like a teacher, a community health volunteer, or a healthcare worker that has been trained to show you how to keep yourself safe until help comes.**
- A trained person can show you the correct way to put on and take off protection like plastic gloves or strong plastic bags so you do not spread Ebola to yourself or others. **IF YOU DO NOT TAKE OFF THE PROTECTION IN THE RIGHT WAY YOU CAN SPREAD EBOLA TO YOURSELF AND OTHERS.** Call 4455, tell your community leader, and look for a health worker, community health volunteer, teacher, or someone else in your community that has been trained.

## Contacts and contact tracing

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- If you know someone that is in the Ebola Treatment Unit or that has died from Ebola you may be a contact.
- You are a contact if you have:
  - Slept in the same house with a person that is sick or has died with Ebola
  - Touched the body of a person that is sick or has died with Ebola
  - Had man and woman business with a person that is sick or has died with Ebola
  - Touched the blood, vomit, poo-poo, pee-pee, sweat, tears or spit of a person that is sick or has died with Ebola
  - Touched the personal belongings of a person that is sick or has died with Ebola
  - Breastfed by a woman that is **confirmed sick with Ebola** or that has died with Ebola
  - Breastfed or wet-nursed a baby **confirmed sick with Ebola**.

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE:** Ebola can be transmitted by breastfeeding. Children should be breastfed unless a health worker advises you on alternative feeding option.
- If you are a contact with someone that has been sick with or that died from Ebola, you should stay home. **Call 4455 so they can advise you.** Do not go around other people or touch people for 21 days.
- It can take up to 21 days for you to get sick after you have been in contact with someone that had Ebola. If you start to show any sign or symptom of Ebola during the 21 days, **DON'T WAIT**, call 4455 for help.
- If you are a contact, you will be asked for your name, phone number and place you live. You will be visited every day by a contact tracer to see if you have fever and to answer any questions you may have.
- A contact tracer will check for fever every day for 21 days to see if you are getting sick. This way you can get help right away if you do become sick. Getting treatment early can help you to survive.
- It is important to work with the contact tracers. Do not hide from them or lie to them. They are following up on you to make sure you don't get sick with Ebola. If you start to show Ebola signs, they will be able to get help quick- quick. You have a better chance to survive Ebola when you get help early.

## SAFE AND DIGNIFIED BURIAL

### Why safe burial is important

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- Ebola is spreading in Liberia from person to person though traditional burial practices.
- **This Ebola time is so painful for all of us. Because of Ebola, we cannot take care for family and friends that die, the way we are used to.**

- When someone die from Ebola, the Ebola virus in the body is still alive and plenty in the dead body. Ebola can be *easily* spread from the dead body to us and to other people when we care for our dead family members the way we are used to.
- Ebola can spread when we touch the dead body; wash the dead body; when we plait or cut the hair of the dead body; when we dress the dead body; brush the dead body's teeth; or bury the dead body by ourselves.
- Any person that touches the dead body can catch Ebola!
- The dead body can only be buried safely by specially trained teams.
- Burying all of the people that die in a way that is safe is one of the best ways to end Ebola in Liberia.
- Safe burial is for everyone! Anyone that die from you, Ebola or non-Ebola, call 4455 to bury them.

#### What a safe burial is \_\_\_\_\_

- The dead body can only be buried safely by specially trained teams.
- There are many different parts to make sure there is a safe burial.
- The first part is to spray the body with chlorine water and get it ready for burial with a body bag.
- The second part is to transport the body to the burial site in a safe way.
- The third part is to bury the body in the ground and conduct any ceremonies in honor of the person.
- The fourth part is clean-up after the burial including spraying the vehicle and burning anything use to touch the body or body bag.
- The burial teams will only start once the family has agreed to the safe burial.

#### Burial Teams \_\_\_\_\_

- Burial teams are supervised and have chlorine sprayers. They spray the chlorine to clean the body and the area the body was in to kill the Ebola virus to keep the family and the community safe.
- The burial teams also wear special protective clothes (the overhaul suits) to keep them safe.
- The burial teams know this kind of safe burial is very difficult for the family and the community. The burial teams are trained to show respect to the body and the family.

- The burial team is doing hard and dangerous work to stop the Ebola virus in Liberia. We should have patience with the teams. They are here to help.

#### How the family can take part in the burial to make sure it is respectful\_\_\_\_\_

- There are different, different ways Christian and Muslim families can take part in these different parts of the safe burial to make sure that the family member is buried in a respectful way. The only rule is to make sure that no one touches the dead body.
- The burial teams will talk to the family members about the different ways they can take part without touching so the family can decide what things they will do to respect their dead.
- The burial teams will tell the families all of the things that will happen to make the burial safe and make sure that everyone understands the steps.
- The burial teams will only start once the family has agreed to the safe burial.
- The burial team will talk with the family so the family can decide with their pastor or imam how the burial can happen in the most respectful way.
- The family can bring their own idea. The only rule is that no one touches the body.
- The family has the right to decide:
  - Who will take part in getting the body ready without touching it
  - Who will view the body before it is put into the body bag
  - Who will take part in any prayers, ablutions, speeches, closing the coffin, feasts or other rituals
  - If the personal things of the dead person will be burned, put in the grave with the person, or sprayed with chlorine to clean them
  - If they want to take pictures of the body preparation or burial (with a smart phone)
  - If they want to provide a coffin for the burial team to use
  - If they want to put any item in the grave or to mark the grave
  - If they want to throw the first dirt onto the coffin
- It is important to know that during this time of Ebola, families may not have as much time as usual to plan for burials. The family will need to make decisions and act quickly.

#### How the burial teams spray the body and get it ready for burial when a person dies at the ETU\_\_\_\_\_

- When a person dies at the Ebola Treatment Unit, the first thing that happens is that the health workers make sure that the person is confirmed dead.

- Then, the health workers tell the hygiene team, the people who can spray the chlorine water.
- The first thing the hygiene team does is to write the person's name and age on a body bag so that when the dead body is put inside, everyone can know who the person is.
- The second thing they do is to put on their protective clothes (the overhaul suits) and enter the room where is the dead body is.
- When they are next to the body, they spray the body, the clothes, and the area with chlorine water to kill the Ebola virus.
- After they spray the chlorine water, the hygiene team will carefully put the dead body into the body bag that has the person's name on it.
- The body bag the people talking about, is too strong. The body is put inside this strong bag to make sure that any body fluids like blood, poo-poo, or vomit, cannot leak out, because these fluids spread Ebola.
- When the body is inside the bag, the hygiene team will zip it closed and spray the outside of the bag with plenty chlorine water to make sure there is no Ebola Virus on that bag.
- The bag must stay closed- it cannot be opened. This is to make sure that any body fluids that might come from the body do not get out and spread the Ebola virus.
- The hygiene team carefully takes the body to the morgue until it is time for burial.

How the burial teams wash the body and get it ready for burial if a person dies at home\_\_\_\_\_

- When a person dies at home, call 4455 and tell your community leader so you can have a safe burial.
- While you are waiting for the burial team to arrive, keep a distance from the body. Do not touch it.
- When the burial team comes into the house, the first thing the team will do is to talk to the community leaders and the family. They will give their condolences to the family.
- The burial teams know that this kind of burial is very difficult for the family and the community. They want to give as much respect as possible to the body and to the family.
- They will give the family time to call the imam or pastor and the person that will be the family witness of the burial. This is the person that will make sure that the burial is respectful.

- The team will talk with the family and the religious leader about all of the steps needed to bury the body safely, and make sure that everybody understands.
- The family will be able to decide at this time how they will take part in the process without touching the body.
- The burial team should not start until the family agrees.
- When the family agrees, the team will put on their protective clothes (the overhaul suits) and carry the sprayers and things off the truck.
- They will follow the safe burial steps to spray the body with chlorine water, put it into the bag, and to spray the bag and the entire area to kill any Ebola virus.

#### How the body is moved and laid to rest in the ground\_\_\_\_\_

- When the body bag has been sprayed with chlorine water, the burial team does not have to wear the overhaul suits. To make sure everyone is safe, gloves will be worn by anyone who touches the body bag. After the body is placed into the grave these gloves will be burned or buried.
- The burial team will take care of the body and take it to the burial sites.
- All of the graves must be dug to 6 feet deep.
- The burial team will help put the body in the grave.
- The family will have time to say prayers, speeches, or songs for their loved one, or to place any item in the grave. The family can mark the grave.
- When the body is inside the grave, the family may fill in the grave and mark it. The family can also choose their own grave stone or add flowers.
- Ebola does not live in dirt, water, or air. When the burial is done in a safe way, Ebola will not make the cemetery or burial site dirty.

## **SURVIVAL & STIGMA**

### Survivors\_\_\_\_\_

- You can survive Ebola. Early treatment increases the chance that you will survive Ebola. Call 4455 and talk to your community leader as soon as you notice the signs and symptoms of Ebola.
- If you have survived Ebola, you cannot catch the same kind of Ebola again.

- Ebola survivors are the best people to take care of sick people if they are willing because they cannot catch the same Ebola again. Survivors that are caregivers must take the same protective steps as anybody else to make sure they do not carry the fluids of a sick person to other family or community members.
- Ebola survivors do not have Ebola, but they should not do man and woman business for 3 months. If you cannot wait, make sure you use condoms correctly!

## Stigma

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- This Ebola virus is a hard thing for all of us. It has taken away our culture of caring and being concerned for each other. We are afraid to talk about it because people can reject us, our family members, our community members, and our health care workers. This is especially true for those that have gone through and survived Ebola. It is important that we all help each other.
- Welcome survivors and anyone whose lives have been touched by Ebola back into the home and the community. Encourage and help them to participate in community activities.
- Survivors and others that have been touched by Ebola can help us. Their stories can help us learn and give us hope.
- Without the work of health care workers, burial teams, social worker, mobilizers, and contact tracers we cannot end Ebola in Liberia. They are all doing hard and dangerous work to keep Liberia safe. We need to welcome and support them.
- We can help survivors and others touched by Ebola when we tell others the truth about how Ebola is spread and how to protect ourselves, our families, and our communities.

## COMMUNICATIONS MATERIAL REVIEW FORM

To request **field testing** or **review** for clearance of a communications tool or product please fill out and submit it with a copy of the material to: Richard Zeon: [gebleezeon@yahoo.com](mailto:gebleezeon@yahoo.com); Lahannah Jawara; [lahannahvillejawara@gmail.com](mailto:lahannahvillejawara@gmail.com), and Stephanie Clayton ([sclayton@unicef.org](mailto:sclayton@unicef.org))

Products will be reviewed within one week. All cleared products will receive the MOHSW logo:



### POINT OF CONTACT

Name:

Organization or group:

E-mail address:

Phone:

Date of Submission:

### MATERIAL DESCRIPTION

Type of material (poster, radio jingle, video, ect):

Title:

Intended audience:

Distribution Method:

### FIELD TESTING

Has this document been field- tested?

No

Yes. Please provide a summary of the results (include date and location of field test).

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR INFORMATION: