

## Guidelines for District Planning for Social Mobilization and Community Engagement

### a. Guiding principles

- **Evidence based:** District social mobilization plans are based on evidence and information gathering.
- **SMART:** District mobilisation plans have objectives that are: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound.
- **Process Oriented:** District social mobilization pillar to review surveillance and epidemiological data for the districts to identify key drivers of Ebola outbreak in the district, which supports planning of the social mobilisation plans. (*What are the major causes for Ebola in the district – Contact / Funeral or Burial / Travel?*)
- **Interrelated and cross cutting:** Social mobilization and community engagement is a cross-cutting intervention across all pillars. Specific social mobilization activities facilitate change by contributing to each pillar and are reflected in the dedicated pillar plans.

### b. Key Strategic Approaches

#### Community Engagement and Enabling Environment

- Create opportunities for dialogue, participation and collaboration in each community through simple and participatory approaches for EVD.
- Increase engagement of the Religious Leaders, paramount chiefs, traditional leaders and community elders at the districts to discuss key challenges and prepare an action plan to combat EVD.
- Introduce concepts of Neighbourhood Support at community level for sustained community ownership in preventing EVD.
- Inform and educate the communities on Ebola, through delivery of specific messages through various media channels (Posters, radio, TV etc) e.g. CCC for early referrals and treatment, Safe burials, signs and symptoms of Ebola etc.
- Strengthen local women and youth community based networks and groups to ensure active participation and engagement for community based interventions for Ebola.

### **Promoting positive behaviour change**

- Ensure increase in knowledge, change in attitudes leads to a positive behavior change especially issues that put communities at a higher risk. This is one of the key challenges to stopping Ebola transmission in the country, especially on safe burial practices.
- Important to remember that everyone contributes to behavior change – from the contact tracer to the burial team member. Invest in interpersonal communication skills.
- Ensure message harmonization and message integration, to prioritize effective communication interventions- focusing on the right message, to the right audience at the right time.

### **Sustain programme visibility**

- Although there are high levels of awareness and knowledge related to Ebola in the country continue to inform and educate the community about the risks of Ebola.
- Irrespective of the status of the district (high, medium or low risk) ensure high level of Ebola related visibility in each district through IEC materials, miking, radio programming, okada rallies, etc.
- High visibility of IEC materials and social media activities in the hotspots.

### **Effective Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Ensure effective monitoring mechanisms are in place (short term and long term) to track program progress
- Ensure timely and effective reporting at the SM pillar meetings.

### **Essential Components and Activities**

The main aim is for the districts to develop social mobilization and community engagement strategies and interventions to promote behavioural outcomes that contribute to early referrals and treatment of cases and safe and dignified burials at individual and community levels.

The proposed components and activities below are only for guidance. Each district should evaluate the epidemiological situation in the district and plan accordingly. The primary difference in approach across high, medium and low transmission districts is in terms of intensity, frequency and deployment of additional resources or activation of existing structures.

*(see page overleaf)*

<b>High Risk</b>	<b>Medium risk</b>	<b>Low risk</b>
Twice a week SM Pillar Meetings	Weekly SM Pillar Meeting	Weekly SM Pillar Meeting
Updated partner and social mobilizers mapping (Who is doing What and Where – 3Ws) Weekly Social Mobilization and community engagement plan prepared	Updated partner and social mobilizers mapping (Who is doing What and Where – 3Ws)	Updated partner and social mobilizers mapping (Who is doing What and Where – 3Ws) Monthly Social Mobilization and community engagement plan prepared
Weekly Social Mobilization and community engagement plan prepared	Fortnightly Social Mobilization and community engagement plan prepared	Monthly Social Mobilization and community engagement plan prepared
Distribution and utilization of IEC materials	Distribution and utilization of IEC materials	Distribution and utilization of IEC materials
Two vehicle mounted miking systems in the district with well-defined daily route maps	Two vehicle mounted miking systems in the district with well-defined daily route maps	One vehicle mounted miking system in the district with a well-defined daily route map
Hold daily radio programmes including airing of jingles, discussion programmes, announcements and interviews	Hold daily radio programmes (simulcast) including airing of jingles, discussion programmes, announcements and interviews	Hold radio discussions programmes, announcements and interviews
Weekly advocacy meetings with Religious Leaders, Traditional Leaders and Community Elders, MPs, Councilors	Fortnightly advocacy meetings with Religious Leaders, Traditional Leaders and Community Elders, MPs, Councilors, etc	Monthly advocacy meetings with Religious Leaders, Traditional Leaders and Community Elders, MPs, Councilors, etc.
Capacity building and deployment of various groups: Interfaith groups, media action groups, youth and women groups and community mobilisers through NGO partners, CBOs, Civil Societies across the district.	Capacity building and deployment of various groups: - Interfaith groups, media action groups, youth and women groups and community mobilisers through NGO partners, CBOs, Civil Societies covering all wards	Activation and capacity building of existing structures as part of response teams at all levels ie Village/community, Ward, Chieftdom headquarters and District levels
Daily monitoring of rumours and security incidents in each ward.	Daily monitoring of rumours and security incidents in each ward.	Create information networks and outlets to strengthen reporting channels and reduce rumours
Use civil society organisations to pressure relevant authorities to enforce compliance to Byelaws and SOPs	Assess compliance to Bye laws and behaviour matters and report to responsible authorities	Assess compliance to Bye laws and behaviour matters and report to responsible authorities
Activation of hotspot busters approach in targeted communities and villages.	---	---