ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This document is produced and edited by the National Communicating with Communities (CwC) Working Group in Greece.

The National CwC Working Group is chaired by UNHCR and Solidarity Now. This document also contains contributions from the following group members:

Caritas Athens
Hellenic Red Cross
International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
Internews
Oxfam
Translators without Borders

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS COMMUNICATING WITH COMMUNITIES (CWC)?

“Communications with Communities (CwC) is an emerging field of humanitarian response that helps to meet the information and communications needs of people affected by crisis. CwC is based on the principle that information and communications are critical forms of aid, without which disaster survivors cannot access services or make the best decisions for themselves and their communities. People working on CwC help disaster survivors to access the information they need and communicate with people assisting them.”

- OCHA (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs)

Communication is aid

WHY IS CWC IMPORTANT?

“Timely, accurate, and well-targeted information saves lives, reduces suffering, and can improve the quality and accountability of aid efforts. Bad or late information can lead to lives being lost or suffering increasing.”

- Internews

“Access to information is fundamental for upholding rights and ensuring life in dignity. The more information is shared with [communities] the more involved, engaged and empowered they will become.”

- From NORCAP’s Guide to Reception Communications
CWC WITHIN THE REFUGEES / MIGRANTS EMERGENCY RESPONSE IN GREECE

Within the context of the ongoing refugees / migrants emergency response in Greece, CwC activities play a crucial role – for all humanitarians, local authorities, UN agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and volunteers. The communities we need to communicate with in this response not only include the refugees and migrants in general, but also individual ‘communities’ within these larger populations (women, unaccompanied minors, specific language and nationality groups, etc.), as well as other communities entirely – local Greek ‘host’ populations, for example, Greek authorities, even other humanitarian actors.

Regardless of the exact ‘target community’, the underlying principles for CwC activities remain the same: by continuously engaging in two-way dialogue with communities, by listening to people’s needs, opinions, suggestions and complaints, we can better adapt our response to the situation and realities on the ground.

The aim of this handbook is to provide humanitarians with a common understanding of what Communicating with Communities is, to highlight its importance within the refugee / migrant emergency response in Greece, and to provide you with guidance using a collection of suggestions, best practices, and case studies on the topic. This handbook aims to support organizations and individuals working across the country to improve and increase their own communications with communities, and therefore improve the quality and impact of their work.
IDENTIFYING & WORKING WITH COMMUNITY LEADERS

Particularly when it comes to communicating with communities residing in longer-term accommodation sites across Greece, it can be difficult to determine the best way to 1) ensure messages and information are reaching all intended recipients, and 2) ensure that all community members are being given equal opportunity to ask questions, offer their feedback, and voice complaints with relevant aid and service providers.

One way of supporting two-way communication in such settings is through the identification and cooperation of ‘community leaders’, who can represent their fellow community members, help share information, gather feedback, and generally act as a ‘go-between’ to improve communication between population(s) and humanitarians.

Due to the large numbers of refugees and migrants at each site, however, combined with the fact that most sites in Greece currently host women and men, girls and boys of multiple different nationalities, ethnic or religious groups, and/or with different language skills, it can be extremely challenging to ensure that such forms of two-way communication and community participation are indeed appropriate, relevant, and/or accessible for all concerned. Differences in nationalities, genders, ethnic backgrounds, religious beliefs, and even political leanings must all be taken into account, to determine whether or not identifying and communicating through community leaders could be appropriate for the given population. And because every accommodation site and the make-up of its population here in Greece is different, this must be considered on a site-by-site basis.

On page 5 of this handbook is a suggested checklist, to provide some guidance for those interested in possibly identifying and/or setting up such a structure.

Why work with community leaders?
What are the added values of participation of the community in protection and aid efforts?

- It facilitates open communication channels
- It creates a clear feedback mechanism between the persons of concern, host authorities, and humanitarians
- It unites and strengthens community voices
- It offers a better understanding of the community, better quality response to issues arising, and better use of resources
Women’s voices must be heard

Women and men have different perspectives, needs, interests and aspirations. They experience different threats, risks and vulnerabilities and they also possess different skills and capacities. In short, women and men experience crises differently. In many cases, women endure extreme hardship such as increased violence and insecurity, restricted mobility, and additional care and domestic responsibilities.

When working in a humanitarian context, it is often easier to communicate only with those people who proactively approach you, with community leaders (and these tend to be men), or with those who speak your language. However, these people do not always represent the wider, diverse community and in many instances, fail to represent women’s voices. We have all seen discussions and consultations take place with only men, resulting in women’s voices not being heard, whether by their own communities or by external actors.

To harness the specific capacities and knowledge of women and to strengthen your understanding of the refugees’ and migrants’ different needs and perspectives, make sure to communicate with, listen to, collect information about, and respond to feedback from women and men, girls and boys.

How? Here are just a few examples:

- Design all assessments and consultations to include questions concerning the different needs and perspectives of men and women and capture sex-disaggregated data and gender-specific information.
- Adopt feedback mechanisms that enable access to, and contributions from, women (e.g. anonymous feedback mechanisms).
- Ensure women are represented in any community-based leadership structures (councils or committees etc.).
- Create women-only structures, through which they may communicate their needs and reactions in safety and with confidence.
- Engage men to enable women’s increased participation.
- Train your staff and other actors to increase their understanding of the gender dimensions of the crisis, on which to base their responses.
COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP & PARTICIPATION CHECKLIST

GOAL: To identify a diverse and relevant group to represent the community, and to support this group in fulfilling its role.

Define a Terms of Reference (ToR):
What are the proposed roles for the community leadership structures?

- To facilitate and provide feedback on the quality, reach and appropriateness of services?
- To identify information and communication needs or gaps in the community?
- To identify and refer individual cases to relevant aid providers?
- Other?

Establish and maintain strong gender-balanced community leadership and participation

- Are there any established leadership structures already in place at the location? (you can check with UNHCR’s Community-Based Protection team if you are unsure)
- Are there any other ad-hoc or organized community ‘groups’ already existing?
- How are the concerns of the refugee community currently being conveyed? Through traditional / tribal leaders? Through volunteers? Feedback boxes?
- Who are the active partners directly working with the refugee community? Are there any organized community mobilization groups?
- How do we diversify the community leadership and ensure representation of women and men, the various nationalities, ethnicities etc? Through election; selection; recommendation; appointment; self-appointment... What is best for our context?

Consider key capabilities

- What are the main capabilities within the refugee community for responding to key communication needs, facilitating feedback, and addressing concerns?
- How can the community support the provision of information, aid, and protection services? Through community forums? Identification of vulnerable families? Neighborhood watch systems?
Identify capacity needs

- What are the capacity needs within the community? Coaching and mentoring? Training on communication and/or community development? Do women and men have different capacity needs which require a tailored approach?

Partnership

- How can this engagement with the refugee population be reflected within an overall CwC strategy? How can coordination groups (starting with any dedicated CwC coordination groups) support the efforts of the refugee community?
- How can feedback be shared between the refugee community and humanitarian actors, and vice versa?
- How is mass information conveyed to the refugee community? Printed materials (signs, billboards), internet connectivity, public address systems, one-to-one communication? How could this information be further conveyed through community leaders?
- What are the information provision services provided in the site, and how can this group support these efforts?
One of the biggest CWC challenges facing humanitarian actors working within the Greek refugee crisis is the sheer number of different languages spoken and understood by refugees and migrants arriving in-country. As a result, the need for relevant translation and interpretation services within this context is enormous – yet, in reality, such services are not always easily (or quickly) accessible.

Therefore, it is extremely important for staff supporting CWC activities to familiarize themselves with the basics about key languages spoken by arriving populations, as well as to consider best practices for working effectively with interpreters out in the field, or for when dealing with translated materials.

**Interpretation vs Translation: What is the difference?**

Interpreters and translators perform similar tasks, but in different settings. While an **interpreter** converts or ‘interprets’ spoken material from one language (the source language) into a different language (the target language), a **translator** converts written material in the same manner.

**Additional Resources**

- To help familiarize yourself with the main languages spoken and understood by arriving populations in Greece, take a look at the **Key Languages** document distributed alongside this manual.

- For learning more about working effectively with both professional and community / volunteer interpreters here in Greece: **Standard operation procedures (SOP) for working with professional and non-professional interpreters and translators in the refugee crisis in Greece** (available through UNHCR’s online data portal)

- The interpreters and translators sub-working group meets every two weeks to discuss in detail issues that are directly relevant for people working in multiple languages.
MAKING TRANSLATION REQUESTS

While making a written translation request is generally more straightforward than working with an interpreter in the field, it’s important to keep a few things in mind:

- Translators should be made aware of the context you are working in, and any specific needs you / your identified audience may have. Whenever possible (and especially if the translator is not present ‘on the scene’), explain these details when making requests.

- If requesting short messages to be translated, which have been simplified or sourced from a longer / more in-depth document, share the original document with the translator. That way, if anything is unclear, they can refer to the original document.

- If something does not seem right once you’ve received the translation, ask for a review – either from your original translator, or from a second one, if possible (two sets of eyes are always better than one!).

- And finally – taking into consideration the complexity and quickly changing nature of this response – it’s important to continue to check whether translated documents or messages you’ve requested / distributed are up to date. It can be the case that even single words or phrases within a larger message change with short notice (particularly for political reasons), so if this happens, you should immediately ask for a correction from your translator. To simplify this process, it is recommended that you send the original document (as well as the translated version) and simply highlight the word(s) or phrase(s) that need changing. This will help ensure a quicker turnaround. You can also physically date any distributed or posted messages, so that if this happens, you know exactly which versions need to be taken down or replaced.

WORKING WITH TRANSLATED MATERIALS

A few suggestions for working with translated materials – whether that be out in the field (posting information up on bulletin boards, for example), or at your computer (copying and pasting text, sending items to printers, etc.):

- Not all computers / programs are able to automatically read different alphabets, or copy and paste right-to-left languages correctly. If you are having difficulty with this on your computer, you may need to add a right-to-left language as an input language. For more information about how to do this using Microsoft Office, you can visit:

  https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Right-to-left-language-features-17d8a34d-36d6-49ad-b765-257cb7cd22e2 [for Windows Users]
When printing translations (on posters, buttons, etc.), always make sure that the text which is sent to the printer / comes back from the printer is the same as the original translation! This may seem simple, but mistakes do happen.

When posting any multi-page translated information up on a wall or billboard, remember that any language that is written right-to-left on the page should also be posted in a right-to-left order (ie: starting with page 1 on the far right, and then moving, in order, towards the left). This is the same for books / pamphlets (which are read ‘back to front’ and right to left) and for pictures or infographics; someone who reads text right to left will follow pictures from right to left as well.
FACE-TO-FACE COMMUNICATION

Face-to-face, word-of-mouth, or ‘verbal information delivery’ continues to be one of the most practical (and therefore popular) methods of information delivery within the humanitarian response in Greece. There are a number of reasons that this type of delivery is preferred to print or online materials, including the many languages represented within this context, limited access to technology and Wi-Fi coverage, different literacy levels among the refugee and migrant population, and even a lack of trust by some individuals when it comes to mass mediums of communication. Additionally, by providing information face-to-face, no special equipment is particularly needed, information can be easily updated, and recipients are able to immediately ask questions and ‘follow up’ on the messages provided.

For all these reasons, word-of-mouth is generally considered one of the most effective and reliable ways of reaching out to the migrants and refugees – both while they were transiting through Greece as well as since the borders have closed for them. And in fact, based on a survey conducted at the Caritas Athens solidarity centers (located at Vathis Square and Victoria Square in Athens) during May and June 2016, of 138 asylum seekers from Afghanistan and Syria questioned, 83% of them rely on word-of-mouth as their main source of information.

Based on this reliance, as well as the practicality and popularity of face-to-face information delivery within this response, the following sections are designed to help provide some suggestions and best practices for both planning and conducting verbal information sessions in the field – specifically focusing on those working in accommodation centers, in urban areas, and/or providing legal information to refugees and migrants in Greece.

**Additional Resources**

- For more general guidance on conducting effective and respectful communication with displaced communities – including best practices for active listening, overcoming communication barriers, managing expectations, dealing with issues of confidentiality, and talking with persons who are distressed – please refer to the relevant PDF, produced by UNHCR and the Katholische Stiftungsfachhochschule München (Catholic University of Applied Sciences Munich), distributed alongside this handbook.
DELIVERING INFORMATION SESSIONS
IN AN ACCOMMODATION SITE OR CAMP SETTING

Before the session:

● Inform the population what is happening, how & why
  Often done via megaphones or loudspeakers – if appropriate.

● Put a system in place
  Perhaps hand out tokens, or limit the number of people per session – 30 max, for example.

● Identify and/or create a space for the session
  Make sure this space is as calm, comfortable, and conducive to dialogue as possible. To ensure comfort, you might want to consider facilitating separate sessions for women and men.

At the session:

● Welcome the people you’re speaking with
  Invite them to sit and consider offering them tea or other refreshments.
  Create a respectful atmosphere.

● Begin by explaining ground rules for the session
  Example: One person speaks at a time.

● Explain what will happen in the session
  Example: “First I will explain the set-up of this site and the services available here. Then I will speak about legal considerations. This will take about 20mins. Then you will have a chance to ask questions. If you have individual questions that are not of general interest, you can approach me individually after the session...” This gives people an understanding of what will happen, and specifically helps to manage expectations.

● Collect a list of Frequently Asked Questions
  This can help you to prepare for future sessions, and/or develop messages that could then be shared via billboards or audio announcements at the site.
COMMUNICATING WITH COMMUNITIES IN URBAN SETTINGS

The following is a list of best practices and suggestions, developed by Caritas Athens, for carrying out information delivery through word-of-mouth and verbal information sessions in Greek public urban areas.

PREPARATION

1. Develop and agree on a set of clear key messages

2. Designate a mobile team of communicators

   - The team of communicators should include at least one interpreter that speaks the language of the target population. Other team members can support in the provision of printed information material, supervision of the information campaign and communication with host communities.

   - At least three communicators should participate – two for face-to-face communication and a third for supervision of the communicators so they are not ‘lost’ out of sight, especially when working in crowded spaces.
• The size of the mobile team should be adequate for the place where the information is being delivered, while keeping in mind that any major disruption to the regular circulation of people and/or cars in the area should be avoided.

3. Identify key public urban areas
   • Try to choose key public urban areas where the intended audience usually gathers to spend time, get supplies and/or access services.

4. Printed communication material
   • Assess the communication needs, as well as the literacy levels of the intended audience.
   • If appropriate (ie: if enough of the population is indeed able to read and write), prepare an information leaflet that summarizes the messages provided during the face-to-face communication, so that individuals can refer back to the provided information later on. Do not forget to include a ‘date of publication’ on these materials.
   • Basic information you might want to provide includes transportation, access to various service hubs, local prices, useful telephone numbers, as well as references to the latest messages from the authorities and related sources.
   • Printed material ideally should be in at least two languages – the language of the intended audience and the official language of the host community. This allows transparency with host communities.
   • Include a section of sources for further information.
   • Assign someone responsible for ensuring that the information material is consistently kept up to date, to reflect any changes that may occur (particularly important for legal information).

5. Inform local authorities on the purpose of the information campaigns
   • Local authorities are naturally concerned about the proliferation of rumours during a humanitarian crisis. For this reason, it is recommended that local authorities are always informed about your presence at specific public areas, and about the purpose of the information campaigns you plan to conduct.

6. Equipment for communicators
   • Ensure that all members of the communications team have proper identification documents – including personal ID, and a letter of the
organization that acknowledges the membership of the communicator, as well as the purpose of the information session. These are particularly relevant if / when authorities ask you to identify yourself.

- T-shirt identifying the logo of the organization(s) responsible for the information session.

7. **Train communicators**

- Communicators should be trained on the key messages.

- Train the team on how to respond when confronted by individuals who may be unhappy with their activities, such as smugglers. There have been cases when smugglers (not wanting to identify themselves as such) have aggressively tried to prevent information teams from informing the public. In such cases, it is advisable to avoid any heated conversation or discussion.

- Encourage the team to stay informed about common rumours and misinformation going around, in order to be able to respond appropriately if asked about them.

**EXECUTION**

- Keep explanations short and clear.

- Before starting the session, try to identify people with relevant language skills from the target population that may also be willing to help you interpret or explain if needed.

- Let members of the team distribute printed material in the area.

**FEEDBACK**

- At the end of the session, ask each person if there is any information they are missing.

- Surveys are good tools for gathering feedback. Though do consider that, for refugees and migrants in Greece (particularly groups that may have lower literacy skills), respondents may be more comfortable with paper-based surveys than they are with technology-based ones (using tablets or laptops).
FOR LEGAL EXPERTS –
DELIVERING INFORMATION SESSIONS

The following best practices are specifically targeted towards international lawyers, and/or legal volunteers who will be conducting verbal information sessions in Greece – regardless of the location or setting. Although the range of international lawyers and legal experts working in the country on the refugee and migrant situation is diverse (representing different nationalities, legal backgrounds, and language skills), the following points are designed to help assist you in conducting effective information sessions related to legal issues, regardless of your personal background or affiliation.

1. Stay on top of legal developments

The legal framework regarding refugees/migrants is constantly changing – at the Greek-level, as well as at EU and international-level. While these frequent changes put a major pressure on humanitarian lawyers working in the field, it is important to keep yourself abreast of the legal developments, either directly or (if you do not speak Greek) via a point of reference, who is knowledgeable about Greek law and can read the material in its original form. Discuss the challenges with your colleagues, and clarify who will be responsible for updating the legal information you deliver to refugees/migrants. Be conscientious of the fact that a group of vulnerable people make life decisions based on the information you provide, so it always needs to be accurate and up to date.

2. If required, check matters before answering

During your fieldwork in Greece you will likely receive legal questions that are related to multiple, transnational jurisdictions and legal frameworks. Particularly as the EU does not operate under one jurisdiction, and EU member states do not all follow the same legal traditions (common law/civil law), this can cause serious challenges. In addition to this, you might not be familiar with: (a) international public law; (b) European law; (c) national law in the various EU member states; and/or (d) Greek law. You should always be upfront with refugees and migrants you are speaking with, and inform them about your specific qualifications - including whether or not you are officially licensed to practice law in Greece. If you receive a question which requires further research, note the refugee’s/migrant’s contact details and get back to him/her when you have checked the matter in
question. Depending on the complexity of the topic you might be able to provide an answer by email, by phone, or arrange for an individual meeting (remember to check with interpreters for their availability). Keep in mind that you are probably one of the few lawyers the individual refugees/migrants are in direct contact with, so your work, dedication and honesty, as well as your feedback (within a reasonable time frame) is important.

3. Address wrong legal information and rumours

Feedback suggests that much of the legal information refugees/migrants receive in Greece is often misinterpreted, inaccurate, or conflicting – and it is evident that refugees/migrants largely see themselves in the middle of an information void. Be sure to pay special attention to dispelling or combatting any rumours you may come across, by explaining the correct version of legal matters and responding directly to questions that you receive during information sessions.

4. Distribute updated information materials

If you distribute any information leaflets or printed materials during your information sessions, make sure that someone in your unit is directly responsible for keeping these up to date with the (frequent) changes in Greek, European and international legislation. Remember to include translations in several languages in order to reach the current refugee/migrant population, and include the date of publication on any leaflets you distribute.

5. Keep your explanations short and clear

It is advisable to keep your messages short and clear when delivering legal information sessions, for two reasons: (a) you will be addressing refugees/migrants representing various countries, educational backgrounds, and literacy levels; and (b) for most information sessions, you will be accompanied by at least one interpreter – who may have limited experience in dealing with legal phrases (which, keep in mind, is usually a specialist area of interpretation). Therefore, it helps interpreters if you deliver your sentences as short and simple as possible, with frequent pauses for them to relay your message. Whenever possible, avoid using difficult ‘legal phrases’ (try to break terms down or explain them using simpler words), and if dealing with any particularly difficult concepts, you may want to repeat the content multiple times, by using slightly different words or by giving examples, just to make sure that you are being correctly understood.
ACCOUNTABILITY TO REFUGEES & MIGRANTS: FEEDBACK

Accountability to refugees and migrants is a fundamental requirement of any humanitarian intervention and hinges on establishing appropriate feedback mechanisms.

Why?

Feedback allows us to know what impact our activities are having (can be either positive or negative, intended or unintended) on women, men, girls and boys and whether these activities are being implemented appropriately. It also helps us to know how activities are perceived and what we could do to improve them in line with people’s needs and expectations.

Providing an opportunity for feedback not only respects the right of refugees and migrants to have a say, but will also help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our activities.

How?

1. Design your feedback mechanism(s) – ideally through consultation with women, men, girls and boys who are/will be engaging in your activities.

2. Communicate what the mechanisms are and how to use them.
3. Agree internally, or with other stakeholders, on a process for analyzing the feedback and responding to it.

4. Obtain approval from the authorities/relevant stakeholders, where necessary.

### What?

Based on your consultations, you can choose any number of feedback mechanisms. Examples include:

1. Regular **community meetings** where women, men, girls and boys can openly share their perceptions. Make sure you include separate meetings for women and men, in addition to those meetings that are mixed.

2. Feedback via text message / SMS.

3. Complaints **phone line** that people can call, ideally for free. Make sure people with the relevant language skills can answer calls and/or include a schedule for what languages are available when.

4. **Surveys**, either using online or offline tools.

5. **Complaints boxes** in which people can anonymously deposit completed feedback forms.

6. A feedback and complaints **desk** with specialized staff allocated to attending the desk. Be sure to publish or post the schedule for any such desk, including (if relevant) what languages are available when.

*Please note:* Feedback material and mechanisms must be designed to be accessible to all, regardless of their gender, literacy-levels, ethnicity, nationality, and age. It is our responsibility to understand who may have reduced capacity to provide feedback and address those barriers.
CWC WITH HOST COMMUNITIES

For many in the humanitarian community, this refugee emergency response in the Mediterranean started in summer 2015. Yet the local population has been responding to the crisis for a number of years. Therefore, it should be of high priority that when communicating with communities, we remember the existence of the host community and the capacity that already exists within it.

It is useful to look at the process of communicating with host communities as twofold:

Collaboration with the host community - volunteers and their activities are part of the civil society.

Communication with the host community - the host population is receiving information, as well as being given the opportunity to ask questions, to get answers, to voice opinions, to provide suggestions and to become involved in implementing projects.

COLLABORATION WITH THE HOST COMMUNITY

Case Study - Hellenic Red Cross
Multifunctional Centre of Social Support and Integration for Refugees (MFC)

MFC aims to integrate refugees into Greek society. Activities include: counseling and psychosocial support, labour market orientation, educational activities for children and adults, interpretation, telephone support line, intercultural and recreational activities.

Means of communication and coordination:

- Leaflets of the project description
- Meeting of the concerned personnel with other organizations
- Participation, with presentation and speeches, in conferences and seminars
- Update to students, volunteers etc.
- Provision of information to agencies and services over telephone, fax devices, mails and online
Telephone Line Information and Support Line for Refugees – Facilitated by MFC & funded by International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

The beneficiaries who call in the telephone line are:
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Foreigners (including immigrants, undocumented migrants, and foreign prisoners)
- Institutions and services
- Broader public

The main objective of the telephone line is the prompt response to refugee requests, mediation services, and the provision of accurate information to people in their native languages. Information includes the following topics: housing, means of subsistence, access to education, the process of granting legal documents, and promotion to the labour market.

The overall objective is to contribute significantly to the smooth integration of refugees and migrants into the host society.

Further Details

Phone line 210-5140440
8:00am - 8:00pm Monday - Friday
Three cultural mediators operate the telephone line.
11 languages and dialects: Arabic, Farsi, Pashto, Dari, Russian, French, English, Greek, Swahili, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi.
COMMUNICATION WITH THE HOST COMMUNITY

In order to comprehensively communicate with host communities, activities should raise awareness on specific issues and also engage the host community in voluntary projects with refugees and migrants.

Case Study - Hellenic Red Cross (HRC)
Raising Awareness

HRC personnel and volunteers work in close contact with the local community to raise public awareness about social issues. This is done by:

- Awareness campaigns at national, regional and local level.
- Speeches and lectures in cooperation with other NGOs, public social services and institutes.
- Group sessions between the local community and refugee and migrant populations.
- Collaborative projects with public schools in order to sensitize the students and be mobilized toward social issues.
- Engaging volunteers – for example, those who make regular visits to the Amygdaleza special detention center for unaccompanied minors (where they provide psychosocial support, organize Greek language courses and engage the youth in other creative activities, such as painting and games).

Local Media

In a humanitarian emergency the local media often plays a central role in CwC response, having already fostered a relationship of trust with their audiences. In Greece, the situation is more complex - as the local media and refugee and migrant population are unknown to each other, and (for the most part) communicate in different languages. However, it is a mistake to disregard the role local media can play. Not only can they provide a bridge between communities, but as professional communicators they possess the skills to assist the affected populations to use their own voices.

Local Media: Gatekeepers Between Communities

- Ownership of mass communication networks and technology
- Relationships with local communities, authorities & organizations
- Ability to assist coordination of local humanitarian response
- Potential development of collaborative programming
The refugee emergency on the Greek Islands has negatively impacted the tourism sector, damaging the local economy. As the number of humanitarian organizations increased on the island of Lesvos the CWC working group recognized that accountability should be shown to the host community in addition to refugee and migrant community. A conscious effort was made to communicate information campaigns, literature and signage in the appropriate languages for the refugees and migrants as well as in Greek for the authorities and local humanitarian responders.

Local media played their role to assist understanding of the international humanitarian presence on the island. Partnering with Radio Aiolos in Lesvos, Internews facilitated a weekly radio show where numerous aid agencies participated in question and answers sessions with the listenership.
DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

The power of digital platforms has been more apparent in the refugee emergency response in Europe than any previous humanitarian emergency. The volunteer sector has successfully used Facebook forums as a recruitment tool, fundraising platform and coordination point for both aid and aid workers. Most importantly the affected population have projected their voice and their stories via social media. By using digital methods to communicate with affected communities we can reach a much wider audience which may otherwise have been inaccessible.

Things to consider

- Appropriate language skills.
- Research capacity when answering questions - incorrect information is difficult to retract.
- Facilitation skills with vulnerable people: We must know how to give people a voice in a safe environment.
- Storytelling should empower rather than exploit for advocacy or fundraising reasons.
- Photography Permission: Consider that the person who has given you permission may not have thought of the ramifications of their image being posted publicly. When using images we must be aware that people have fled conflict and that posting photographs and identifying information could put their family members left behind in danger and could threaten the person’s safe return home in the future. Many digital photographs contain so called ‘geotags’ that show the GPS coordinates where it was taken.
- Photography permission for children: It is illegal to photograph children without parental consent. Even with parental consent we must think about the experiences refugee children have lived through and reflect upon the impact high levels of media attention is having on their psychological recovery.
Social Media Checklist

- Respond within 24 hours to comments – even just liking, favouriting, retweeting or answering with a “Thank you” is often all needed to show that we are listening.
- Develop a standard responses document – particularly for difficult questions - speak with one voice! Get technical teams involved.
- Regularly monitor and track the trends in questions and feedback, and report these to management and relevant departments. (Accountability)
- Be particularly mindful of increasing concerns & fears.
- How can you adapt your Community Engagement based on what people ask about? What are the information gaps & needs?

- IFRC social media for community engagement guidelines
CWC ONLINE TOOLS & APPS

INFO APPS:
• RefAid
• InfoAid
• IFRC Migration Platform (to be launched in July)

TRANSLATION APPS:
• ICOON for Refugees (non-verbal)
• Translation Cards (Google Play)
• Google Translate (including offline language downloads & voice playback function)
• Refugee Phrasebook – interactive version

TEAM COMMUNICATION APPS:
• Whatsapp
• Viber
• Slack
• Skype

DOCUMENT SHARING:
• Google Drive
• Dropbox
• WeTransfer

CwC SIGNS AND MATERIALS:
UNHCR Repository: Click on the ‘Communication with Communities’ Tab at – http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/working_group.php?Page=Country&LocationId=83&Id=4%E2%80%8B
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

To find out more about Communicating with Communities:

- **OCHA - What is Communications with Communities?**:

- **Global Symposium +5 on Information for Humanitarian Action**:
  http://www.cdacnetwork.org/tools-and-resources/i/20140610200806-imyip

- **Humanitarianism in the Network Age**:
  www.unocha.org/hina

- **BBC Media Action Policy briefing: Still left in the dark: How people in emergencies use communication to survive – and how humanitarian agencies can help**

- **CDAC Network**:
  http://www.cdacnetwork.org/

- **CDAC Network - Communicating with Communities during the First Six Weeks of an Emergency Response**:
  http://www.cdacnetwork.org/contentAsset/raw-data/3b8afbbf-d9de-4a0e-be3f-71bd36ef030f/attachedFile

  http://www.cdacnetwork.org/tools-and-resources/i/20140721173332-ihw5g

- **UNHCR: Community-based Outreach Outside of Camps**

- **UNHCR: Community Centres**
For up-to-date information and news about what is happening in Greece:

- Hellenic Republic - Minister of Interior’s Asylum Service Website
  http://asylo.gov.gr/

- News That Moves
  https://newsthatmoves.org/en/

- Refugee Info
  https://refugeeinfo.eu/