



COVID-19

Community Engagement

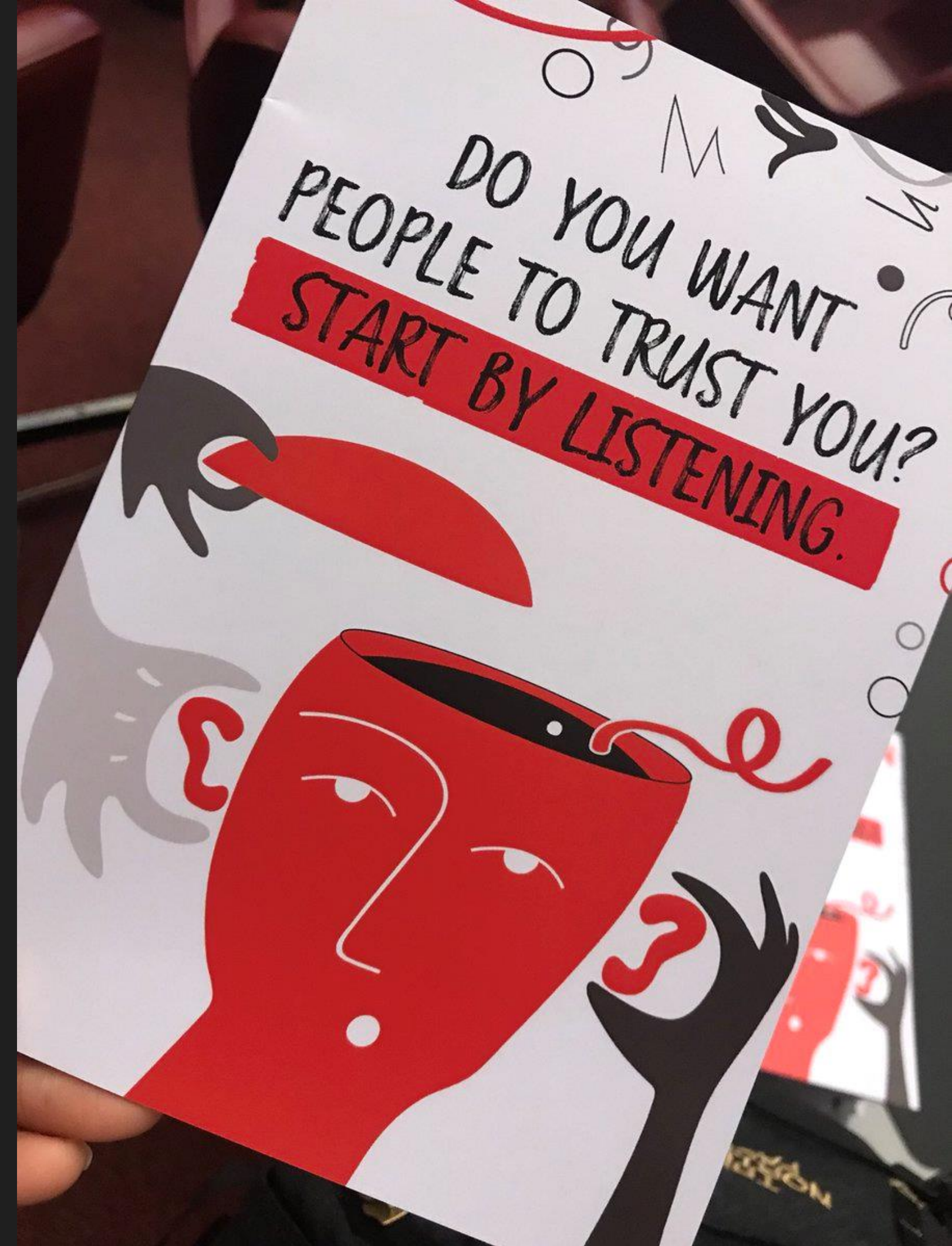
Viviane L. Fluck PhD,
CEA coordinator, IFRC Asia Pacific

07 April 2020

Overview

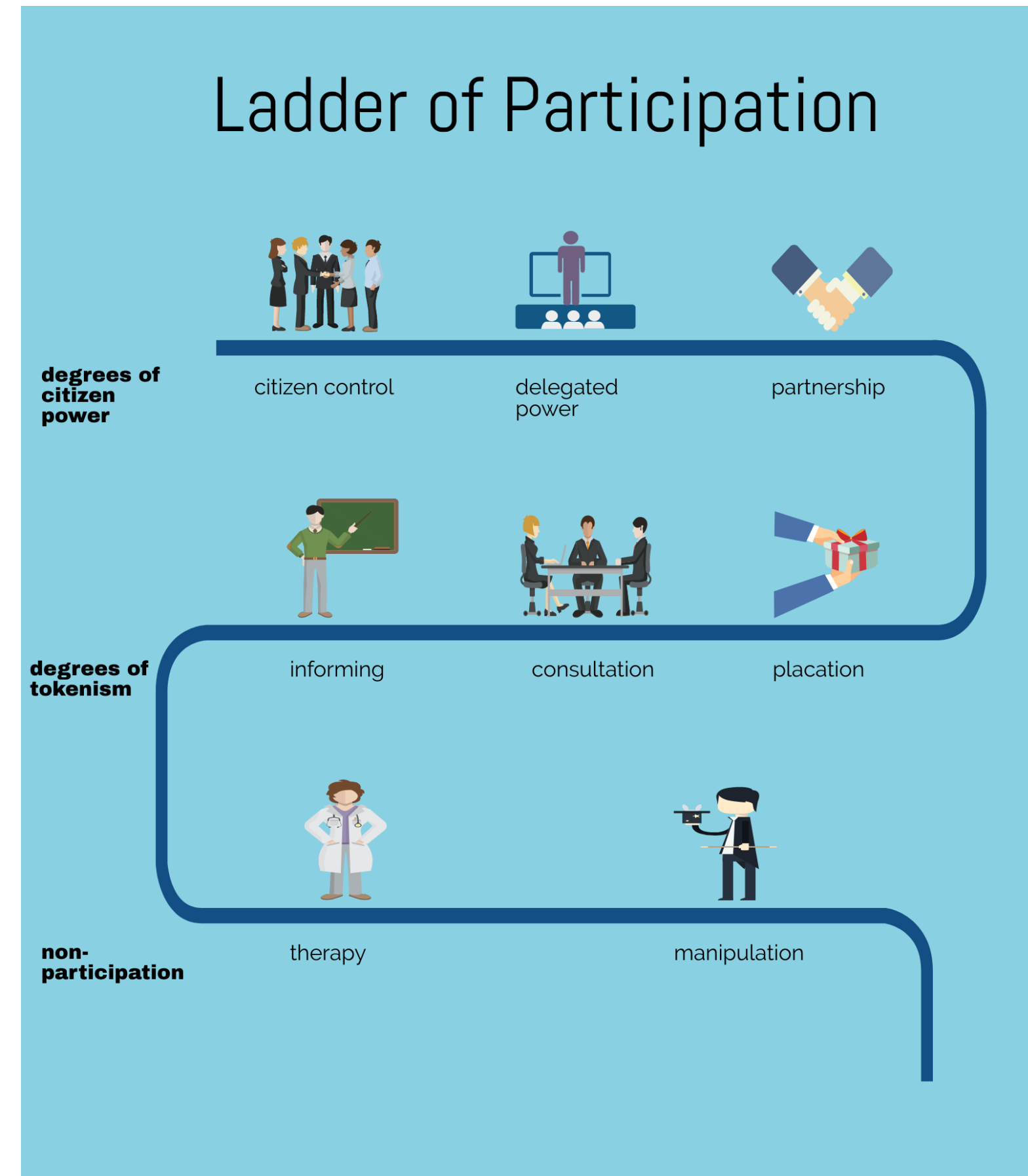
- Community engagement
- How to address rumours
- Engaging communities in times of physical distancing
- Available tools and resources
- Discussion

Community Engagement











Participation

- The (ultimate) goal: communities in the driver seat
- Different steps of participation
- Moving away from clear-cut 'steps' to a multi-level approach



Ladder of citizen participation, Sherry Arnstein, 1969

Why do we need to engage communities?

-  Opens up decision-making
-  Builds trust and partnership
-  Holds us (service providers) accountable
-  Manages expectations & reduces rumours, misconceptions
-  Helps us 'Do no Harm' & be more accessible & inclusive
-  Helps people access the support and information they need
-  Amplifies people's voices & recognises them as experts
-  Increases sustainability

Challenges

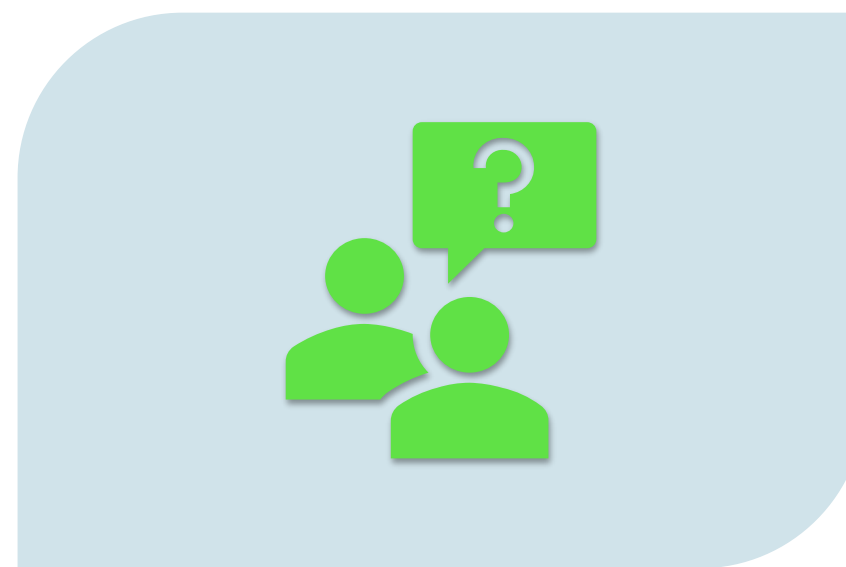
- Decreasing face-to-face interactions
- Misinformation & rumours
- Geographical spread



Community Engagement



Ask first,
message later



Feedback:
engage,
document,
address,
adapt



Build trust

People want to know
that you **care**...

...before they care
about what you know!

How to build Trust

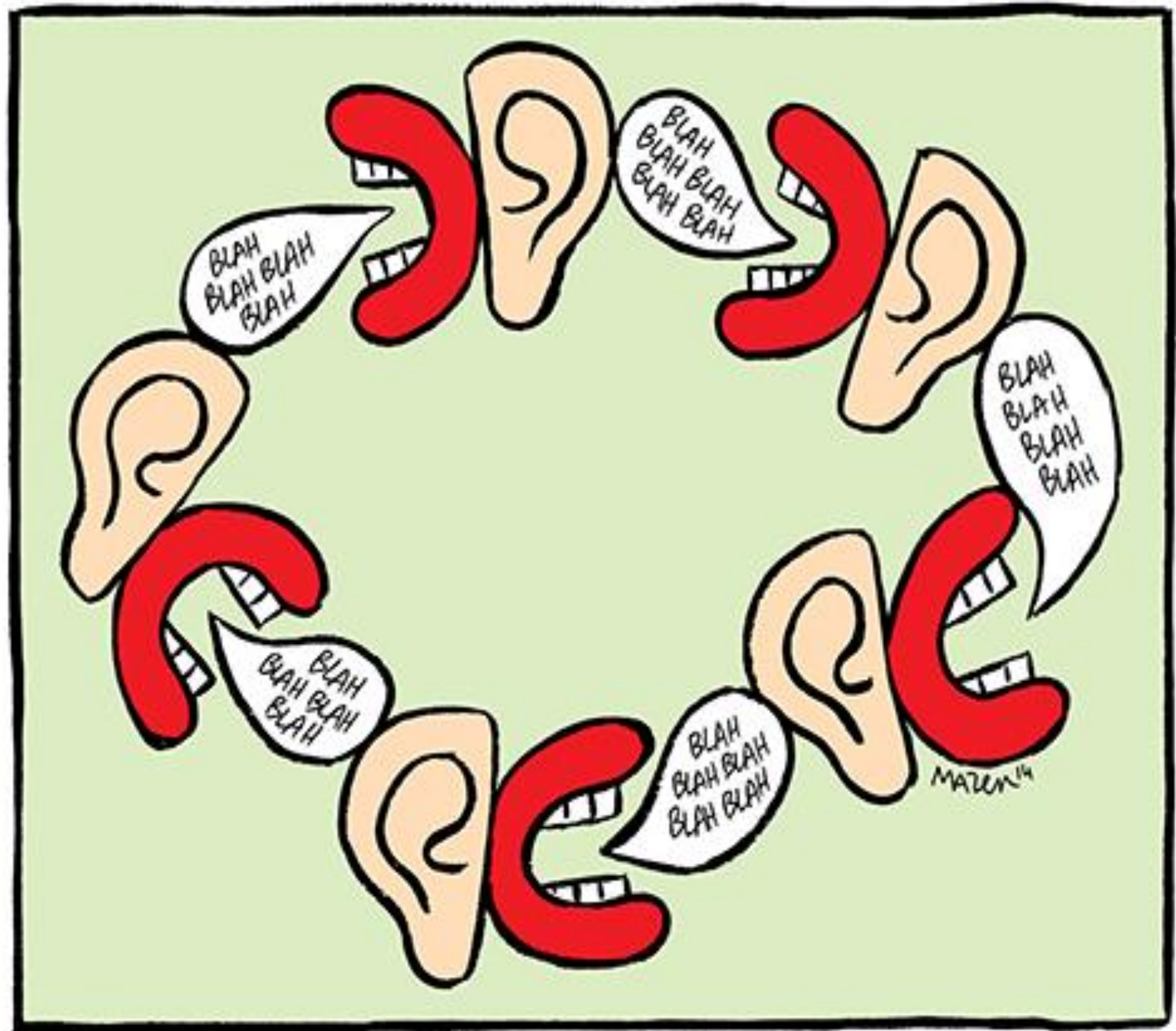
- **Ask first**
 - Accessible & inclusive decision-making (participation)
- Be open, honest, transparent
 - Share what you know, what you don't know & what you are doing
- Communicate frequently
- Link to functioning and accessible service
- Easy-to-understand
 - languages, education levels, preferences for audio, visual or written formats;
- Show empathy
- **Address feedback and follow up**



I don't trust words,
I trust actions.

www.facebook.com/followyourdreamstoachieve

How to address rumours & misconceptions



Different rumours, different risks:

Potential impact	Rumour example
Stops people accessing services	'If you go to a treatment centre you will die'
Causes conflict or stigma	'All people coming back from China are sick with COVID-19' 'migrants are bringing this disease'
Leads to risky behaviour	'This is incurable'
Puts certain groups at risk	'The middle class are more at risk because poor people have strong immunity'
Puts response teams at risk	'This disease was brought by foreigners' 'Medical staff are all infected'
Impacts on reputation	'This disease was introduced to get money'

Stigma

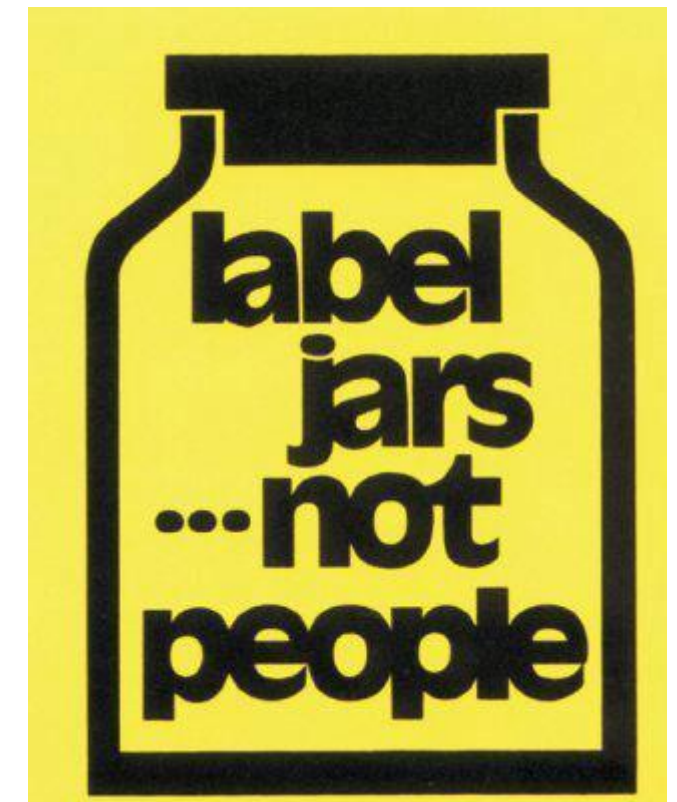
Causes: information gaps and underlying prejudice/xenophobia

Key tips:

- Address anxieties and knowledge gaps & take them seriously
- Don't use stigmatising language ('Wuhan Virus')
- Engage community leaders to speak about inclusion and stigma
- Share stories of different people preparing/overcoming COVID-19
- Portray different ethnic groups in your messaging (diverse team)
- Promote ethical journalism (give access to useful and verified information)
- ...

Find more tips here:

- <https://www.communityengagementhub.org/what-we-do/novel-coronavirus/?search=stigma&resource-type=0®ion=0>



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)

Step 1: Listen and capture

Establish a system to document community feedback

Volunteers, social media, traditional media, feedback system, social media monitoring, radio ...

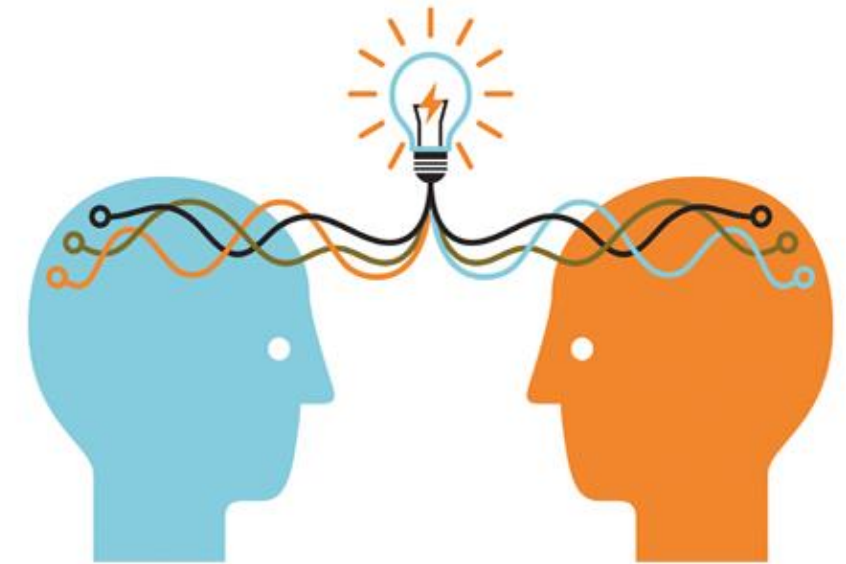
Remember:

- Listen in the local language
- Open and unstructured conversations
- Include a diverse group of people
- Don't just ask about rumours
- Trust is critical
- Training



Step 2: Understand rumours

- What about the rumour is true or false?
 - Check with the experts & get the facts
- Speak to the community to understand more
- Be careful not to spread rumours



Step 3: Engage & respond



- Always address rumours
- Factual and actionable information
- Trusted communication channels
- Familiar language(s)
- Respect local customs and culture
- Engage in conversation, check you are being understood
- Ensure all staff and volunteers have FAQs

Feedback Dashboard



Date received*

All Periods MONTHS

2020

JAN FEB MAR APR M

sensitive*

no

vulnerability*

elderly

none

Sex*

female

male

Age range*

18-29

30-39

40-49

50-59

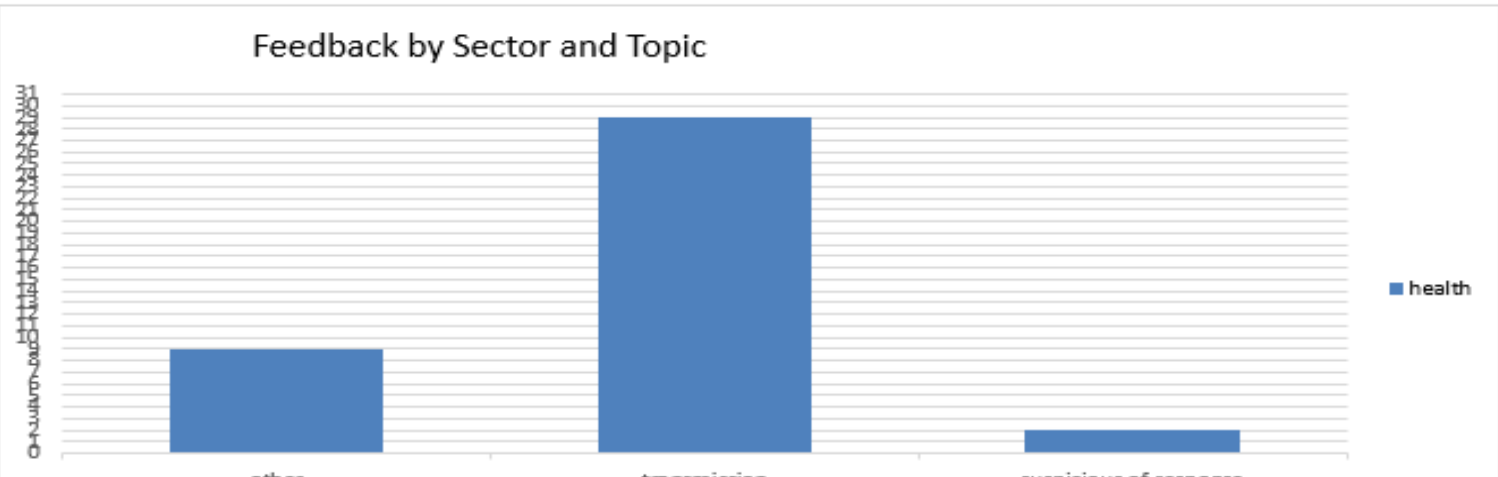
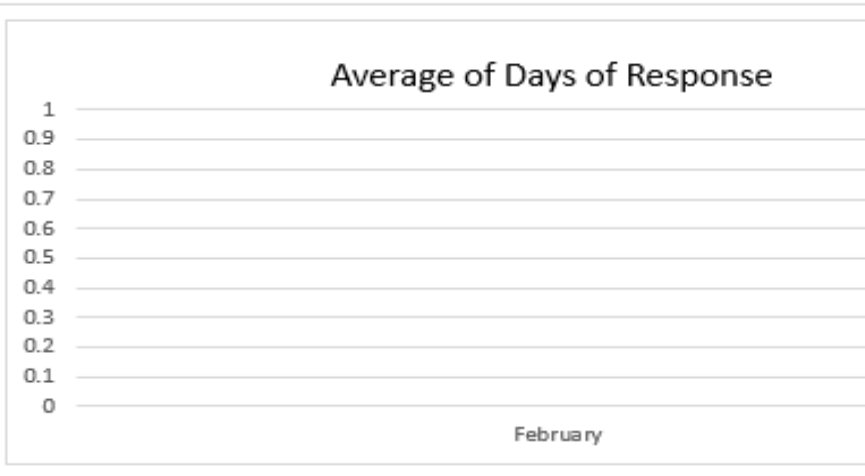
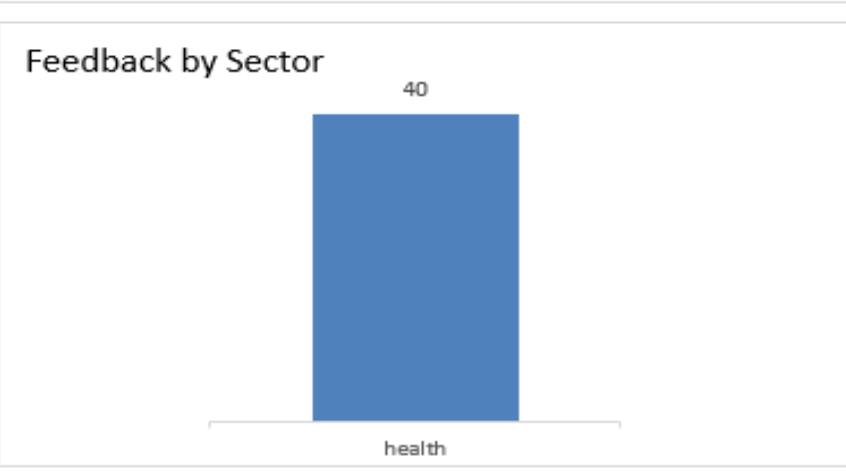
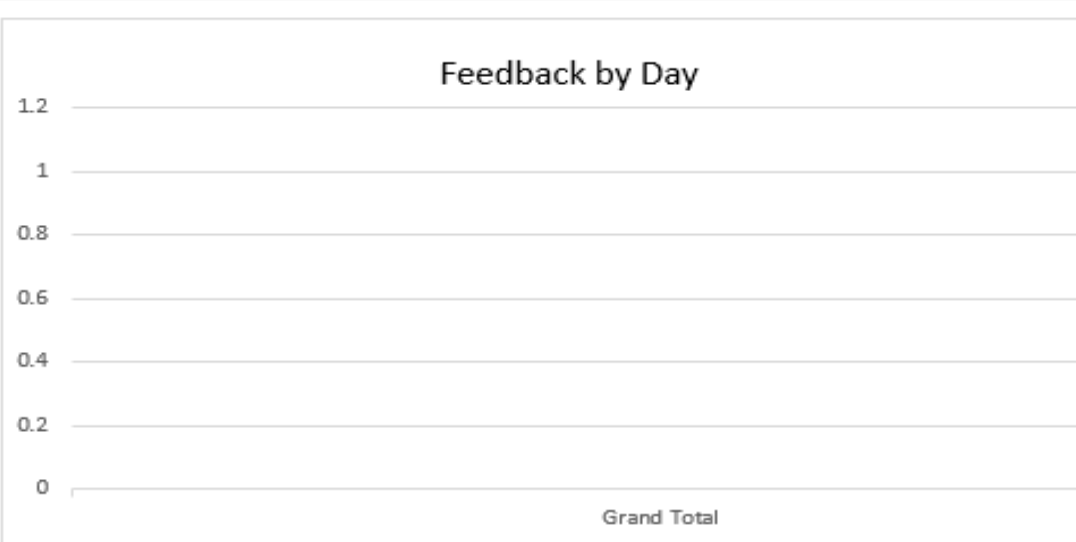
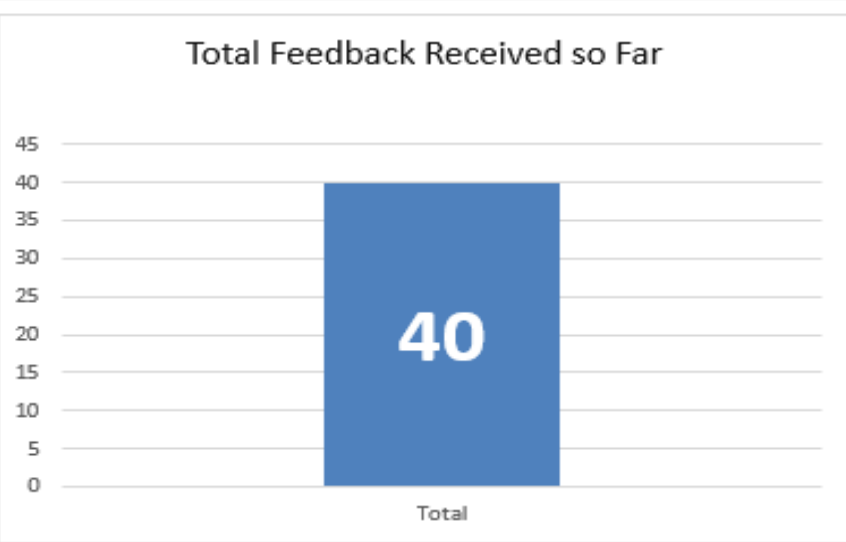
Location 1*

Indonesia

(blank)

Location 2

(blank)



Choosing channels

A good channel is:

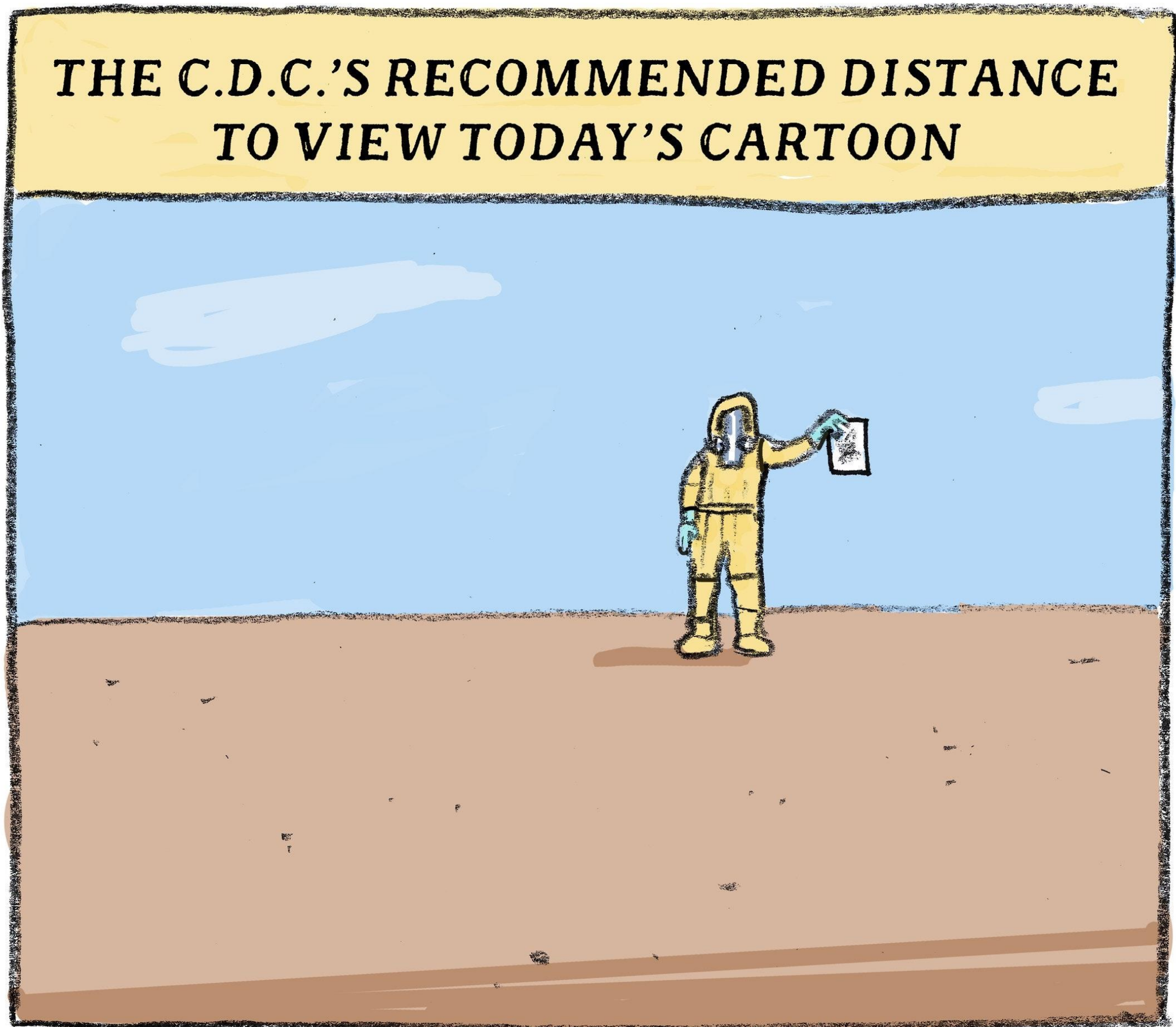
- ✓ Locally available
- ✓ Trusted
- ✓ Accessible

Other things to consider:

- ✓ Use multiple channels
- ✓ Who is excluded?
- ✓ Reputation
- ✓ Capacity and resources



**Engaging
communities
in times of
physical
distancing**



KUPER

Screenshot: The New Yorker

Including marginalized & vulnerable groups

- Which are marginalized and vulnerable groups?
- What communication channels/languages do they trust and prefer?
- What solutions do these groups suggest ?
- How do they want to participate?
- Which partners work with them?
- More tips: https://www.communityengagementhub.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/03/CC19_CommunityEngagement_1303201.pdf



Moving from face-to-face interaction to...?

- **Pre-position phones/tablets and radios** with community groups and volunteers
- Map **which activities still take place** and use those to engage (hygiene promotion, handing out masks etc.)
- **Use relevant social media platforms and messenger apps**
 - Messenger groups (WhatsApp, Line etc.) for volunteers and for community members
 - Tik Tok, facebook live, twitter...
 - <http://virtualvolunteer.org/>
(Italy, Iceland, Colombia, Sweden, Philippines)
 - ...
- **Call-in radio shows**
(guidance: <https://www.communityengagementhub.org/what-we-do/novel-coronavirus/?search=radio&resource-type=0®ion=0>)
- **Local hotlines** (calls or texts in the local language)
- **Call your volunteers**, set up calls or chat groups with your volunteers



Screenshot: New York Times

Resources & tools



Resources

- Feedback starter kit
 - Feedback/rumour tracking form
 - Excel dashboard
 - ...
- How to address and prevent stigma
- IASC interim Guidance: scaling up COVID-19 outbreak readiness and response operations in humanitarian situations including camps and camp-like settings
- How to include marginalized and vulnerable people into risk communication and community engagement
- Key tips & discussion points for community workers, volunteers and community networks
- Rapid assessment tool
- How to use social media for COVID-19

Where to find resources:

Community Engagement hub:

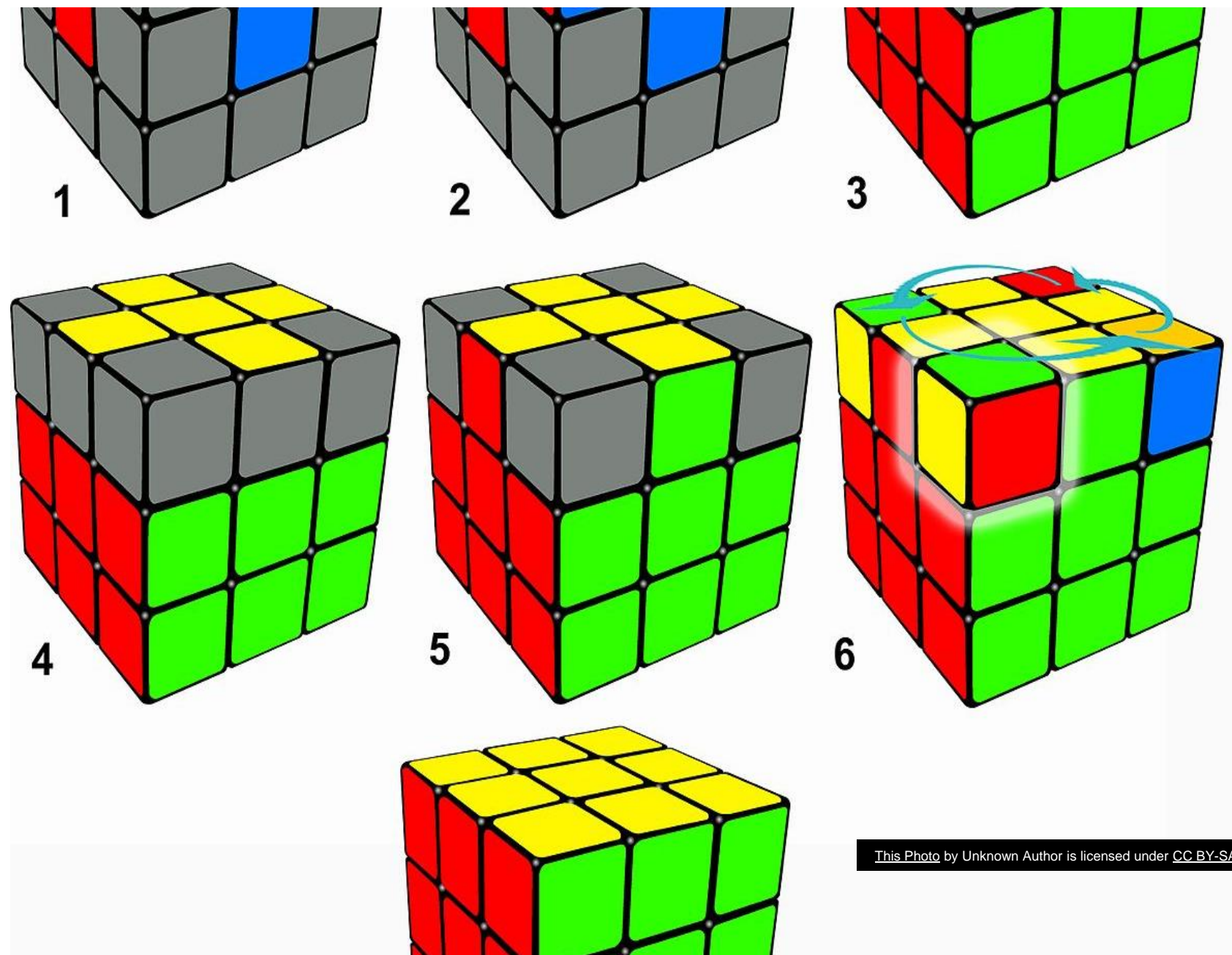
<https://www.communityengagementhub.org/what-we-do/novel-coronavirus/page/1/>

Inter-agency google drive:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1DNWkY5Q6tXAmwNiyWAbjTJAA90dxPQCJ>

→ Please add your resources (especially translated ones) to the -!!INBOX folder on the google drive

There is no simple solution



- Ask first
- Find solutions with the community
- Use multiple channels to engage
- Link up with others
- Check back often

Get in touch

Viviane L. Fluck, PhD
Regional community engagement &
accountability (CEA) coordinator
IFRC, Asia Pacific

Viviane.fluck@ifrc.org