“Communicating” Country Countdowns

Getting the Messages Out

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Introduction – why “communicate”?

Collecting and analysing data is the core of Countdown – but in order for it to have an impact, key findings must reach key audiences.

- Data must be translated into clear, actionable messages.
- Messages must be shared with individuals and institutions that will take action.
- The public must understand and support the messages and actions.
Messages

- Scientific WG identifies key messages, based on data analysis
- Communications WG ‘translates’ messages into understandable concepts and language
  - Identify key audiences
  - Develop and produce report and other materials
  - Produce charts and text that are clear and simple
- Ensure that organizing committee and scientific WG agree and approve final materials/messages
Partners

- Dissemination and advocacy requires participation of partners from all relevant sectors
  - MOH and other government agencies
  - Parliamentarians
  - UN agency representatives
  - Academics
  - Health care professional associations
  - NGOs
  - Donors
  - Private sector
  - Media
Events

- A national Countdown event galvanizes attention to RMNCH and mobilizes concrete actions

- Keys to a successful event:
  - Start planning early!
  - Decide on timing
  - Develop budget and secure funding
  - Ensure broad participation from all sectors
  - Get help from professional event planner, if necessary
  - Engage high-level policy makers
  - Focus on concrete outcomes

- Consider sub-national events too...
Media

- National, regional, and local media are critical to generating attention and building support
  - Different media important to different audiences – consider TV, radio, newspapers, bloggers
  - Don’t forget social media – important for reaching youth

- Media coverage takes planning
  - Consider engaging media relations agency
  - Ask partners to directly contact key media figures
  - Issue media advisory before event
  - Issue press release for event, report publication – focus on key messages!
  - Hold media briefing or press conference

- Build long-term relationships; continue to push key messages
Remember...

- Success requires planning
- Think about your audiences
- Use clear, concise messaging
- Be inclusive
- Media attention is crucial
- Follow-up makes for lasting change

Evidence without advocacy has little or no impact

- advocacy is what makes change happen