













# How to communicate during flood emergencies: from the authorities to the population

<p><b>In general, when communicating with media</b></p>	 <p>Focus on a few topics at a time.</p>	 <p>Be accurate. Correct any misinformation.</p>	 <p>Admit when you are unable to answer a question at the moment.</p>
 <p>Keep the message clear. Avoid using too much technical jargon.</p>	 <p>Distinguish facts from opinions.</p>	 <p>Answer sensitive questions only when completely certain and authorized to do so.</p>	 <p>Maintain a friendly attitude and relaxed atmosphere.</p>

## STRATEGY

 <p>Designate a spokesperson, supported by crisis &amp; communications specialists</p>	 <p>Keep a cooperative attitude towards journalists</p>	 <p>Provide additional communication tools, such as 24-hour phone lines</p>	 <p>Design a procedure for working rapidly and effectively under pressure</p>	 <p>Set a calendar of regular meetings</p>
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## CONTENT

 <p><b>Be careful about the order in which news is transmitted.</b> Primary information comes first.</p>	 <p><b>Provide specific details,</b> such as flooded areas and number of victims and displaced people</p>	 <p><b>Issue warnings for the immediate future,</b> including flood alerts, regions at risk and potential threats</p>	 <p><b>Relay actions currently being taken by authorities:</b> relief measures and setting up shelters and field hospitals</p>
 <p><b>Share information about other actors providing assistance in the field</b></p>	 <p><b>Communicate what authorities plan to do in the coming days:</b> evacuations, planned rescue operations, aerial surveys, and distribution of relief goods</p>	 <p><b>Advise people on what to do to stay safe:</b> where to go/not to go, where to get support, or to refrain from returning home unless authorized to do so</p>	 <p><b>Share medium &amp; long term expectations:</b> if and when people may reoccupy their homes, when reconstruction will start, who will carry it out, and who will bear costs</p>

## TONE

 <p>Keep the main goals in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to be visible</li> <li>• to show the population that authorities are present and operative</li> <li>• to build confidence that authorities will be able to manage the situation</li> </ul>	 <p>Remember that using optimistic language is the best way to help people to calm down and maintain confidence in the authorities</p>
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