

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Niger State Contributory Health Scheme (NiCare)



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Acknowledgements

Niger State Contributory Health Agency (NSCHA) acknowledges the resilient support of the Result for Development (R4D) and Health Systems Consult Limited (HSCL) consortium in the development of the Niger State Contributory Health Scheme Communications Strategy. The impact of the consortium since the inception of the Agency has been felt in the State.

Our most sincere appreciation goes to the consultant, Dr. Ifeanyi McWilliams Nsofor and his team in EpiAFRIC for their technical expertise and patience in driving the process of developing this document.

The Communications Strategy is well structured to strategically drive the communications effort of the Agency towards achieving Universal Health Coverage in Niger State.

Acronyms

BHCPF	Basic Health Care Provision Fund
CAN	Christian Association of Nigeria
COPD	Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
ECWA	Evangelical Church of West Africa
FOMWAN	Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria
HSCL	Health Systems Consult Limited
IEC	Information, education and communication
JIBWIS	Jamaatul Izalatil Bid'ah Wa ikamatus Sunnah
JNI	Jamaatul Nasrul Islam
LGA	Local Government Area
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MS	Multiple Sclerosis
NASFAT	Nasrul-lahi-li Fathi Society of Nigeria
NCH	National Council on Health
NGSCHA	Niger State Contributory Health Agency (NiCare)
NGSCHS	Niger State Contributory Health Scheme
NHAct	National Health Act
PFN	Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria
R4D	Results for Development
SSHIS	State Social Health Insurance Scheme
TB	Tuberculosis
ToR	Terms of Reference
TPAs	Third Party Administrators
TV	Television
UHC	Universal Health Coverage

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Executive Summary

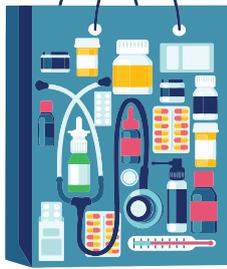
As part of Niger State’s broader strategy to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC) for citizens, the Niger State Contributory Health Agency (NGSCHA), developed this communications strategy guide for the deployment of the Niger State Contributory Health Scheme (NGSCHS), to sensitize and engage all Niger residents. The aim of the communications strategy is to identify practical and modern approaches to tell the Agency’s story, build stakeholder awareness and expand the use of what the Agency offers in terms of the contributory health scheme, and deepen support for the Agency’s strategic vision.

The development of the communications strategy was borne out of a strategic training of the NGSCHS communications staff. The training was aimed to take the staff through the process of developing an effective communications strategy which would help the Agency ensure that Niger state residents are well informed about the scheme, empowered and inclined to enrol into the scheme, thereby contributing to towards the ultimate goal of achieving UHC.

Several strategic, cross-cutting areas that will drive the execution of the strategic plan and associated examples, methods, and tools are clearly explained in the different sections of this guide, including stakeholder mapping,, messaging, and the use of communication channels,– including Mainstream Media, Social Media, One on One Meetings, Press Briefings and Town Halls, to deliver messaging to target audiences and execute the strategy.

The communication strategy was developed with the support of Dr. Ifeanyi Nsofor and the Demand Side Financing Project.

” Several strategic, cross-cutting areas that will drive the execution of the strategic plan and associated examples, methods, and tools are clearly explained in the different sections of this guide



THE NIGER STATE VISION

To ensure that all residents, especially the poor and vulnerable, have access to health services without any financial barriers

1.0 Background

Niger state's vision is to ensure that all residents, especially the poor and vulnerable, have access to health services without any financial barriers. This is in conformity with the mandate of UHC¹, which is to ensure that all people have access to needed health services (including prevention, promotion, treatment, rehabilitation and palliation) of sufficient quality, while also ensuring that the use of these services does not expose the user to financial hardship. To deliver on this mandate, Niger state established the NGSCHS. The state has also been selected as one of the pilot states to roll out the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF) as provided by the National Health Act (NHA).

The law establishing NGSCHS was passed in 2018 and mandates the scheme to: **1) ensure that all residents of Niger State have access to effective, quality, and affordable healthcare services; 2) ensure financial protection for all and equitable distribution of healthcare costs across different income groups; 3) maintain high standard of healthcare delivery services within the health sector; 4) ensure the availability of alternate sources of funding to the health sector for improved services; and 5) ensure patronage of healthcare delivery across board.** To this end, Results for Development (R4D) and Health Systems Consults Limited (HSCL) consortium, through the Demand Side Financing Project, provided support to develop a strategic communications strategy in order to effectively communicate the scheme's activities, objectives, and value-add to stakeholders.

Effective strategic communication is essential to realize the set objectives and vision of the State Social Health Insurance (SSHIS) and in the long term, UHC. Progress toward UHC requires local ownership and customized strategies for specific contexts. Diverse stakeholders must be engaged— including political leaders, health care providers, enrollees, suppliers, formal and informal sectors of the population, civil society groups—and each audience requires tailored communication approaches to increase knowledge and change attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions with regard to the scheme.



¹ Universal Health Coverage. Retrieved from https://www.who.int/healthsystems/universal_health_coverage/en/ on Wednesday, 8 January 2020



COLLABORATIONS...

Media will be fully involved in sensitization through different channels

1.1 Rationale for the Communications Strategy

Why the Communications strategy?

The establishment of NGSCHS is a key step in the journey towards the achievement of UHC in the state. However, the enrollment of beneficiaries requires strategic communication that will enhance their knowledge and positively shift their attitudes and behaviors towards engaging in the scheme and seeking health care. Effective communication will relay the essence of the scheme and the benefits enrollees will derive from being a part of it, in addition to debunking preconceived notions that may create doubts about the scheme.

Furthermore, the target audience for the communications strategy goes beyond enrollees and should reach all residents of Niger state including leaders in both the legislature and executive levels, civil society organizations (CSOs), private sector, religious and traditional leaders, and the media to ensure they fully support its implementation in the state. The media, which is a major stakeholder of the scheme, will be fully involved in sensitization through different channels such as radio, television, and other platforms, which will be done in English and local languages.

1.2 Approach to Developing the Communications Strategy

The processes and approaches adopted in the development of the communications strategy include:

- **Consultations with key stakeholders:** A scoping mission was conducted with key stakeholders to get a full understanding of the state's strategic communications' realities and context. This consisted of identifying key actors, assessing capacities within the agency, and exploring opportunities and channels by which the scheme communications strategy can be implemented.
- **Training of communications staff and third-party administrators:** A training module was developed to address the communication gaps identified during the scoping mission. The goal of the training was to provide the Agency with necessary tools to understand how to communicate the programs and initiatives of the scheme in simple language, develop a messaging framework for targeted stakeholders in the state, and to make effective



KEY CONSIDERATION...

The peculiarities of Niger state must be considered in the communications strategy of the Niger State Contributory Health Agency

use of communication channels to spread the message of NGSCHS to target audiences. The communications staff of the Agency were first trained using the developed modules and subsequently supported and co-facilitated a step-down training to third party administrators (TPAs). The trainings generated knowledge, skills, and experiences, that informed development of the strategy.

- **Use of international tools, materials, and resources:** International tools and resources on how to effectively communicate in support of health financing reform were also referenced to ensure the scheme's strategy aligned with global best practices.

1.3 Core Communication Policy Thrusts Based on 21st Century Global Best Practices

Niger state is the largest state in Nigeria based on land area with an estimated population of approximately five million people². The state has huge diversity of culture, religion and language, and socioeconomic status, and has international borders with the Republic of Benin. There are many tribes and ethnic groups in Niger State. The three most predominant ones are Nupe, Gbagyi and Hausa. Other tribes include, Koro, Kadara, Kambari, Kamuku, Pangu, Bassa, Bauchi, Fulani, Dukawa, Gade, Godara, Ganagana, Dukawa, Mauchi, Ayadi, Ingwai, Dibo, Kadanda, Gulengi, Abishiwa and Shigini³. Furthermore, Niger State residents are predominately in the informal sector, as only 26,000⁴ are employed in the State civil service. This communications strategy of the Niger State Contributory Health Agency must therefore consider these peculiarities of the state.

In rolling out a strategy, there are several best practices⁵ that government should adhere to:

One Government, One Voice.

It is confusing for citizens when conflicting information on government policies and interventions come from the same agency of government. To mitigate this, government agencies must align internally, articulate the messaging, designate spokespersons

² Niger State. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niger_State [Accessed on January 30, 2020]

³ About Niger State. Available at <http://tens-niger.com/about-tens/about-niger-state/> [Accessed on April 13, 2020]

⁴ Niger State Govt Uncovers 1,000 Ghost Workers. Available at <https://allafrica.com/stories/201909300271.html> [accessed on April 13, 2020]

⁵ Best Practices In Communications for Public Servants. Adapted from <https://www.resultsmap.com/8-best-practices-in-government-communications/> [Accessed on January 23, 2020]



MUST DO...

Flexible communications unit must be provided with a term of reference to guide their work

and, identify the relevant channels through which messaging about NGSCHS should be communicated to stakeholders.

People-focused Communications.

Government policies and interventions are for the benefits of the citizens. As a result, the citizens must be at the centre of any messaging from the government. This can be achieved by understanding the demographics of Niger State, cultural and religious differences and the unique needs of the people in terms of healthcare. For instance, messaging for long-distance truck drivers in Niger State could be delivered through the association's leadership and posting posters within their offices in different motor parks, in addition to more general channels such as radio stations because these drivers are often on the road for long periods of time.

Flexible Communications Unit

A government agency such as NGSCHA has staff with varying capabilities. Therefore, the communication needs of the agency must not be relegated to only the designated public relations officer. The agency can do a capacity mapping to identify the various communications strengths and resources that exist within and leverage these individuals to meet its objectives. This flexible communications unit must be provided with a term of reference to guide their work (*please see ToR in Annex 6*). Flexibility is increasingly important in today's interconnected and fast-moving digital world. The agency should engage those within as well as gradually bring on board people with strengths or expertise in specific areas such as social media, traditional media, people skills, and community engagement, as needed.

Digital and Open by Default

Transparency by governmental organisations is key to increasing trust by their citizens. The Agency should look to set a standard of transparency from the onset in its communications with the public. This means sharing as much information about NGSCHS as possible in a timely, relevant and responsible manner. Linked to this, in today's world, information is increasingly digital, and it is necessary for the Agency to ensure that it develops and maintains a robust digital presence. This includes having a functional and interactive website that is updated regularly, as well as sharing information about the scheme and other health programs of the



MUST DO...

Communications strategy must be used to plan and achieve results

state through social media platforms such as *Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn*. This is important for accessibility and openness and for ease of information sharing on the part of the Agency.

In addition, the infographics developed for messaging are best disseminated in English and different languages including Hausa, Nupe and Gbagyi, on social media and various other platforms and should help Niger State residents better understand why they should buy into the scheme by clearly articulating the problems, proffering solutions, and giving them a call to action to act upon.

Results-Based

From inception, the Agency must clearly understand what results they are trying to achieve and use the communications strategy to plan and achieve those results. One way to do this is to use a standardized project management tool such as a simple workplan or a more detailed M&E framework to identify, track and report on objectives.

These best practices should shape the execution of the communications strategy and associated activities.

2.0 Objectives of the Communications Strategy

The integrated objectives of the Communications Strategy are:

- To inform Niger residents of NGSCHS and how it works.
- To raise awareness and increase visibility of the scheme and the scheme agency.
- To convey the benefits and value add of NGSCHS to Niger residents to increase support across various stakeholders and encourage enrolment.
- To advocate and mobilize support from key government actors and policy makers towards the scheme.

3.0 Theory of Change for Communications Strategy

The communication strategy and its activities are envisioned to increase knowledge, address expectations, and facilitate behavioral change in Niger residents, as well as foster citizens trust in the healthcare system. These outcomes will not only help achieve key objectives,



KEY ACTION...

Agency should make use of data generated to review messaging and make them more relevant and evidence based

as outlined above, but will also contribute towards the ultimate UHC goal of reducing out-of-pocket healthcare expenditure and improving health-seeking behaviors of Niger state residents. Each of these sequenced components produce a communications strategy theory of change (TOC)— an outline of the causal links between a series of activities and associated results that contribute towards achieving an end goal⁶.

4.0 Core Elements of Strategic Communications

The World Health Organization articulates three objectives of UHC - equity, quality and protection from financial risks⁷. Consequently, to achieve the goal of NGSCHS, communications to residents of Niger State should similarly be clear, evidence-based, context-specific, professionally delivered, client-centered and evidence-based. This can be done achieved through following key elements of strategic communications:

- **Identify relevant stakeholder:** The stakeholder list developed (See Annex 1) will guide the Agency in segmenting stakeholders, targeting them with context-specific messaging, delivering messaging via traditional and new channels and creating feedback pathways for residents to ask questions in order to make informed decisions.
- **Develop, utilize, and continually refine messaging:** Messaging on the scheme should be aspirational so that residents are motivated to engage and contribute towards the scheme instead of continuing to make out-of-pocket payments to access healthcare. Behavioral change happens at different times for different people, therefore messaging must be iterative and should be regularly updated using available data, to meet the needs of the people. As enrollment progresses, the Agency should make use of data generated to review messaging and make them more relevant and evidence based, as needed.
- **Leverage communication channels:** It is imperative that existing communications channels be strengthened and used to deliver messaging. For instance, in Niger state’s final UHC readiness assessment report⁸, health educators, ward development committees, and village development committees were identified as being responsible for disseminating

6 Rogers, P., Theory of Change, Methodological Briefs: Impact Evaluation 2, UNICEF Office of Research, 2014

7 What is health financing for universal coverage? Available at https://www.who.int/health_financing/universal_coverage_definition/en/ [Accessed January 26, 2020]

8 Niger State Ministry of Health (2018). Getting Ready for Universal Health Coverage in Niger State: A Stakeholder Assessment of Readiness and a Path Forward



KEY CONSIDERATION...

Existing communications channels should be strengthened and used to deliver messaging

health information at Local Government Areas (LGAs), wards and communities respectively. In addition, health workers, traditional leaders, religious leaders and civil society organizations (CSOs) compliment and support these existing communication channels.

These key elements are further explained in the sections below.

5.0 Audience Segmentation and Stakeholder Mapping

5.1 Audience Segmentation

There is no single standard approach to segment an audience. Defining your audience can be done through a number of segmentation methods⁹. Several common methods are outlined below. Because people and their needs change, some of these approaches may also evolve over time.

Table 1: Common Audience Segmentation Approach Criteria

COMMON AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION APPROACHES	
TYPE OF APPROACH	SEGMENTATION CRITERIA
Geographic	nations, states, regions, cities, neighborhoods, zip codes, etc.
Demographic	age, gender, family size, income, occupation, education, religion, ethnicity, and nationality
Psychographic	lifestyle, personality, attitudes, and social class
Behavioral	user status, purchase occasion, loyalty, readiness to buy
Decision maker	decision-making role (purchaser, influencer, etc.)

Such approaches can be utilized and serve as a basis for stakeholder mapping, as referenced below.

⁹ Segmentation Criterial and Approaches. Available from <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/marketing-spring2016/chapter/reading-segmentation-criteria-and-approaches/> [Accessed on January 23, 2020]



MUST DO...

Stakeholder mapping, that allows for more equity by ensuring that the voices of every group are heard, must be conducted

5.2 General principles for stakeholder mapping

To implement any initiative or program, it is important to conduct a stakeholder mapping because different stakeholders have different characteristics and interests and exist in different contexts. Therefore, identifying the stakeholders and understanding their interests, values, and motivations is crucial to successfully executing a communications strategy. In addition, there are also power dynamics among different stakeholders that should be accounted for. Stakeholder mapping, in this case would allow, for more equity by ensuring that the voices of every group are heard.

Once stakeholder mapping has been conducted, it is then important to identify the primary audience (those whose perception or behaviors must change in order for communications strategy to prove successful) and the secondary audience (those whose perception or behaviors may contribute towards achieving communication strategy objectives).

(Please see Appendix 1 for further information on stakeholder mapping).

6.0 Messaging

6.1 General principles for message development¹⁰

When specific objective has been determined and audiences are prioritized, one can then begin to develop, test, and use messages. Developing tailored messaging to specific stakeholders is a critical component of the communication strategy. It is essential in reaching audiences and achieving strategic communications objectives. It's also important that messaging used is understandable and familiar to various stakeholders, who in many cases may not be technical experts.

WHO advises the following questions should be considered in developing messaging to ensure it is appropriate and effective:

- How familiar is the target audience with topic? Do they have some knowledge, or will they need additional information?

¹⁰ WHO Strategic Communications: Framework for Effective Communications.



KEY CONSIDERATION...

Messaging on the scheme should be aspirational so that residents are motivated to engage and contribute towards the scheme

- What should the audience do with the information received?
- Does the message articulate a call to action from the audience?
- What kind of visuals or infographics can further emphasize the message with the audience?

(Please see Appendix 2 for further information on messaging)

7.0 Communication Pathways

7.1 Guidelines for Utilizing Communication Channels¹¹

Once messaging has been developed for target audiences, it's imperative that appropriate channels are utilized to get across messaging to relevant stakeholders. Communication channels are usually categorized into the following areas, as outlined below.

- **Owned Channels** are platforms, events, meetings, and engagements that the Agency controls and cannot be manipulated or changed by external factors. Such channels may include website, blogs, email, etc.
- **Hybrid owned/paid channels** are in reference to champions or advocates who are compensated for their communication role through stipends, per diem, or some other form of payment.
- **Paid Media** is paid for advertising, including, billboards, TV, radio shows, and social media promotions.
- **Earned Media** are public relations channels that cover policy-related topics in either print or digital media such as local and national news channels. The Agency in this case has little to no control over this channel.
- **Shared Channels** allow for sharing of information across different audiences, usual online. Typically consists of social media platforms such as *Facebook*, *Twitter*, and *LinkedIn*. However, these platforms are not owned by the Agency but other parties.

¹¹ Strategic Communication for Universal Health Coverage: Practical Guide, 2018, Joint Learning Network for Universal Health Coverage, Health Finance and Governance Project, Abt Associates, Results for Development.



KEY ACTION...

Identify and consider the target audiences' preferences when it comes to receiving information.

- **Hybrid shared/owned channels** allow for sharing of information on social media platforms owned by the Agency
- **Hybrid Earned/Shared Platforms** involves working with individuals of influence and collaborating with external parties to push out messaging.

There isn't a standard approach to selecting appropriate channels for target audience—it will largely depend on contextual factors such as costs, as well as the type of stakeholder(s) in question. However, the following few guiding principles can help inform selection.

- **Identify and consider the target audiences' preferences when it comes to receiving information.** For example, some may prefer in person interactions, while others would rather consume information online or on social media.
- **Make sure to be focused, and strategic in using online or digital platforms to reach a target audience,** so it does not come across as generic or impersonal.
- **Maintain some level of formality in the choice of channel used, when necessary.** This will largely depend on the topic and stakeholder in question.
- **Determine how frequently the channel should be used based on the target audience.** This can be achieved by using findings of the stakeholder analysis (See Annex 1).
- **Consider if the channel allows for feedback from the audience.** In some cases, the ability to receive such feedback is crucial.

Table 2 outlines different communication channels that can be explored by the Agency in communicating key messages and their corresponding guidelines, appropriate stakeholders, costs, and platforms.



KEY CONSIDERATION...

Develop three key messages that you want to deliver at each interview – and make sure spokesperson can deliver them succinctly, with plenty of examples and facts in support

Table 2: Communication Channels for NCSCHS

CHANNEL	GUIDELINES	STAKEHOLDERS	NIGER STATE PLATFORMS
MAINSTREAM MEDIA: TV, radio, print	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify spokespersons for each of the media outlets from within the team • Develop official headshots for each spokesperson and member of the team • Identify media and other communication channels and influencers and assess their potential reach for potential target audiences – use channels and influencers trusted, preferred and regularly used by target audiences. • Develop radio jingles, TV adverts, Print newspaper adverts in different languages • Develop a media release timetable for mainstream media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and LGA executives/ legislators • Political parties • Local communities (farmers, market men and women etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radio Niger • Newline newspaper • Niger State TV • Crystal Radio • Prestige Radio • Ultimate FM • Search FM • TVC News • Blueprint • Daily Trust
ONE ON ONE INTERACTIONS: radio/TV interviews/ expert panels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop three key messages that you want to deliver at each interview – and make sure spokesperson can deliver them succinctly, with plenty of examples and facts in support. • Anticipate difficult questions and prepare your answers. • Do your research. Understand the nature of the show you are appearing on. This will help you target your message correctly. • Wear clothes that advertise the NiCare brand and products and ensure they are neat, clean and comfortable. Avoid distracting patterns, stripes and bright colors. In some instances, you can appear on a branded outfit that advertises the NiCare brand or products. • Men should make sure that any facial hair is trimmed. • Women or men with long hair should make sure it is pulled back, particularly if an interview will take place outside the studios. • Engage or designate a photographer for the event or briefing. • After interviews, ask the media house to give you a clip of the interview so you can post it on your own platform to promote your message. 		



KEY CONSIDERATION ...

Website should be user-friendly, should have search optimization, and should be linked to social media portals

CHANNEL	GUIDELINES	STAKEHOLDERS	NIGER STATE PLATFORMS
EVENT BASED ACTIVITIES: press briefing, media roundtable, sponsored programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write and print press releases for journalists ahead of the event. • Design and print banners for the event. • Engage or designate a photographer for the event or briefing • Engage or designate a videographer for the event or briefing • Designate key team members to speak at the press briefing or roundtable 		
NGSCHS WEBSITE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop content for the NiCare Website (Photographs, videos, infographics, articles) • Website should be user-friendly, should have search optimization, and should be linked to social media portals • Engage or designate a website content manager who will oversee the running of the website 		NGSCHS Website
SOCIAL MEDIA (e.g. <i>Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop content for your social media platforms, while being mindful of the character limits peculiar to each of the platforms • Ensure that you use more of clear and understandable infographics in communicating your messages. • Deliberately look out for influencers relevant to your message and strategically tag their handles 		NGSCHS Twitter Account NGSCHS Facebook Account

7.2 Important Public Health Days and Events

Public Health Day events can be leveraged across various channels and platforms to share messaging with target audiences. Table 2 shows different public health days and events which the Niger State Contributory Health Agency can use to advance and disseminate messaging, categorized into different quarters of the year:



KEY ACTION...

Public Health Day events can be leveraged across various channels and platforms to share messaging with target audiences

Table 3: Important Public Health Days and Events

1ST QUARTER	2ND QUARTER	3RD QUARTER	4TH QUARTER
JANUARY 1: <i>New Year Day/ World Day for Peace/ Global Family Day</i>	APRIL 1-7: <i>Prevention of Blindness Week</i>	JULY 12: <i>World Population Day</i>	OCTOBER 1-31: <i>Breast Cancer Awareness Month</i>
JANUARY 27: <i>World Leprosy Day</i>	APRIL 2: <i>World Autism Awareness Day</i>	JULY 28: <i>World Hepatitis Day</i>	OCTOBER 1: <i>World Vegetarian Day/ International Day of Older Persons</i>
FEBRUARY 1-28: <i>Healthy Lifestyle Awareness Month/ Reproductive Health Month</i>	APRIL 7: <i>World Health Day</i>	JULY 29: <i>World ORS Day</i>	OCTOBER 5: <i>World Teacher Day</i>
FEBRUARY 4: <i>World Cancer Day</i>	APRIL 11: <i>World Parkinson Day</i>	AUGUST 1-7: <i>World Breastfeeding Week</i>	OCTOBER 10: <i>World Mental Health Day</i>
FEBRUARY 12: <i>World Epilepsy Day</i>	APRIL 17: <i>World Haemophilia Day</i>	AUGUST 19: <i>World Humanitarian Day</i>	OCTOBER 11: <i>World Anti-Obesity Day</i>
FEBRUARY 15: <i>International Childhood Cancer Day</i>	APRIL 22: <i>World Earth Day</i>	SEPTEMBER 8: <i>World First Aid Day</i>	OCTOBER 12: <i>World Arthritis Day/ World Sight Day</i>
FEBRUARY 24: <i>World Sustainable Energy Day</i>	APRIL 24: <i>World Immunization Day</i>	SEPTEMBER 10: <i>World Suicide Prevention Day</i>	OCTOBER 13: <i>International Day of Disaster Reduction</i>
MARCH 1-31: <i>Tuberculosis (TB) Awareness Month/ Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month</i>	APRIL 25: <i>World Malaria Day</i>	SEPTEMBER 21: <i>World Alzheimer's Day</i>	OCTOBER 15: <i>Global Handwashing Day</i>
MARCH 1: <i>Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month</i>	MAY 1: <i>International Labour Day</i>	SEPTEMBER 28: <i>World Rabies Day</i>	OCTOBER 16: <i>World Food Day/World Anesthesia Day</i>
MARCH 8: <i>International Women's Day/World Kidney Day</i>	MAY 2: <i>World Asthma Day</i>	SEPTEMBER 29: <i>World Heart Day</i>	OCTOBER 17: <i>Anti-Poverty Day</i>
MARCH 16: <i>World Sleep Day</i>	MAY 5: <i>International Midwives' Day</i>	SEPTEMBER 30: <i>World Deaf Day</i>	OCTOBER 20: <i>World Osteoporosis Day</i>
MARCH 20: <i>International Day of Happiness</i>	MAY 8: <i>World Thalassaemia Day</i>		OCTOBER 24: <i>World Polio Day</i>
MARCH 21: <i>World Down Syndrome Day</i>	MAY 12: <i>International Nurse's Day</i>		NOVEMBER 1-30: <i>Lung Cancer Awareness Month</i>
MARCH 22: <i>World Water Day</i>	MAY 17: <i>World Hypertension Day</i>		NOVEMBER 12: <i>World Pneumonia Day</i>
MARCH 23: <i>World Meteorological Day</i>	MAY 30: <i>World Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Day</i>		NOVEMBER 13-19: <i>World Antibiotic Awareness Week</i>
MARCH 24: <i>World Tuberculosis (TB) Day</i>	MAY 31: <i>World No Tobacco Day</i>		NOVEMBER 14: <i>World Diabetes Day / World COPD Day</i>
	JUNE 1: <i>World Milk Day</i>		NOVEMBER 17: <i>World Prematurity Day</i>
	JUNE 5: <i>World Environment Day</i>		NOVEMBER 20: <i>World Children's Day</i>
	JUNE 8: <i>World Brain Tumor Day</i>		DECEMBER 1: <i>World Aids Day</i>
	JUNE 12: <i>Anti-Child Labor Day</i>		DECEMBER 2: <i>World Pollution Prevention Day</i>
	JUNE 14: <i>World Blood Donor Day</i>		DECEMBER 3: <i>International Day For Disabled Persons</i>
	JUNE 15: <i>World Elder Abuse Awareness Day</i>		DECEMBER 10: <i>Human Right Day</i>
	JUNE 19: <i>World Sickle Cell Day</i>		DECEMBER 12: <i>UHC Day</i>
	JUNE 21: <i>International Day of Yoga</i>		
	JUNE 26: <i>International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking</i>		
	JUNE 11: <i>World Population Day</i>		



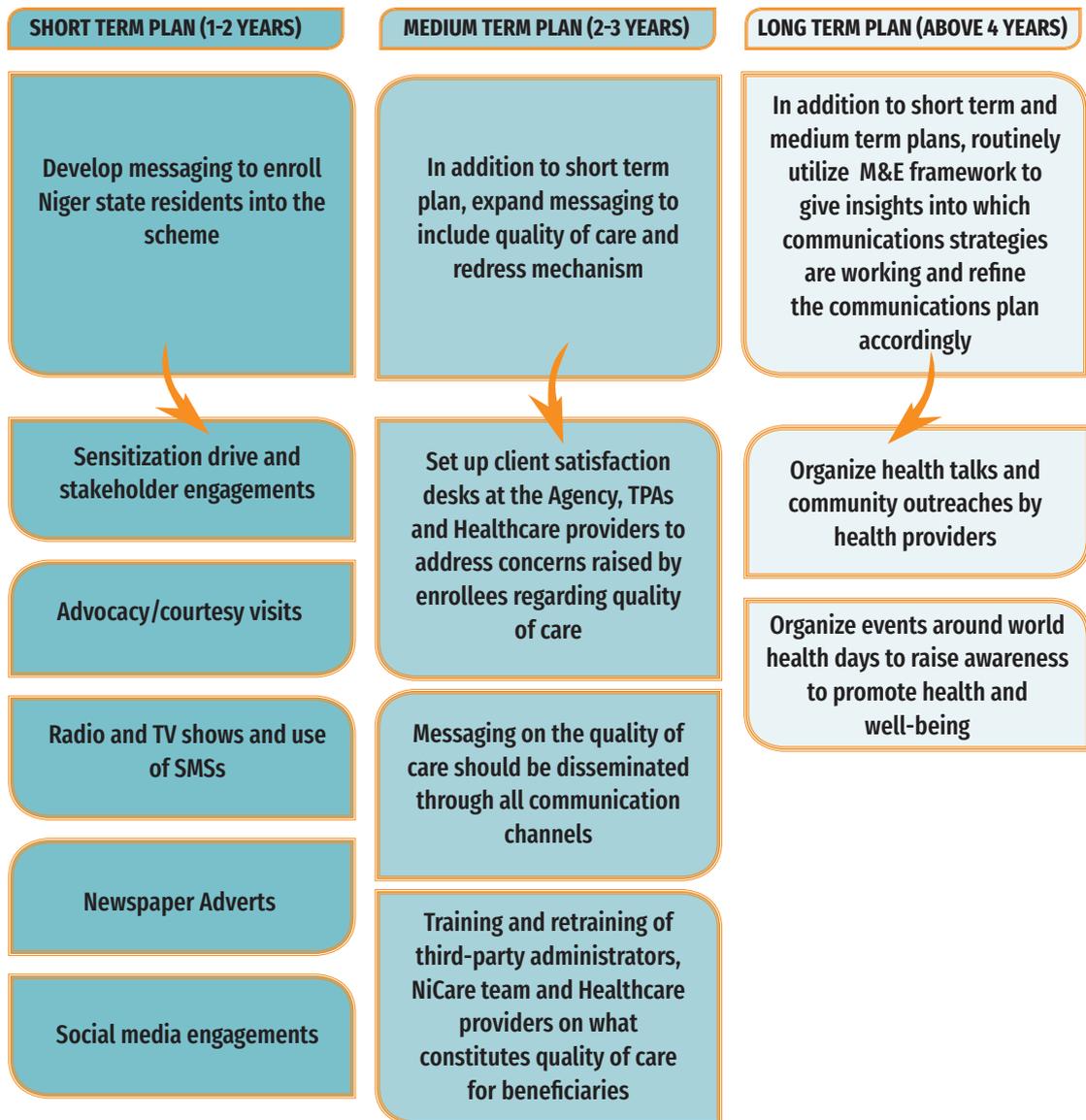
MEDIUM-TERM GOAL

Set up client satisfaction desks at the Agency to address concerns raised by enrollees

8.0 Implementation Plan for the Communications Strategy (short, medium and long-term)

To achieve the objectives of the communications strategy, it is imperative to develop an implementation plan. Table 4 shows a spectrum of activities in short, medium, and long term basis targeted at driving the communications strategy.

Table 4: Implementation Plan for the Communication Strategy





KEY ACTION...

It's important to establish metrics and methods by which to measure progress made towards the end objective.

9.0 Monitoring, Evaluation and Continuous Learning

Monitoring and evaluation is a key component of strategic communications because it helps determine if the communications strategy is being effectively executed and if the right information is reaching the appropriate stakeholders. Therefore, it's important to establish metrics and methods by which to measure progress made towards the end objective. There are a few underlying principles that can help shape the development of an M&E framework (*Please see section 9.1 for a sample M&E framework*). They include:

- **Define and align on the primary objective:** Ensure, first and foremost, that there's a clear understanding of the primary objective, as this will serve as a basis for the framework.
- **Develop outputs:** Outputs are immediate products of activities conducted (e.g. published articles, public event held, etc.)
- **Develop outcomes:** Outcomes are the results borne out of communication activities (e.g. increased knowledge and support of stakeholders; increased enrollment rates, etc.)
- **Identify indicators:** Variables are used to measure change, can be qualitative or quantitative, and can be used to measure either outcomes or outputs. For each indicator there should be a means of measurement and frequency of measurement.

The M&E plan will generate data and findings that will inform and refine implementation of the communications strategy and facilitate continuous learning. Key elements of the strategy (e.g. audience targeting, messaging, communication channels, etc.) can be adjusted and improved upon as needed. Therefore, the agency should consider instituting routine meetings or check ins at certain intervals to discuss M&E findings, reflect on activities, and act upon feedback and progress that is continually monitored.



KEY CONSIDERATION...

there is need for a well-structured monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the performance of NGSCHS communication activities

9.1 Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Framework Template¹²

To measure the performance of NGSCHS communication activities, there is need for a well-structured monitoring and evaluation framework. The M&E framework below is a sample highlighting some of the planned communications activities of the scheme and would serve as a reference point for the Agency to develop a state-specific M&E framework. Therefore, this sample framework is a guide. Each of the activities has measurable and defined indicators, expected outputs & outcomes, means of verification, and timelines for delivery.

¹² Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework template Retrieved from <http://www.tools4dev.org/resources/me-framework-template/> Accessed on January, 13 2020

Table 5: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

OBJECTIVES (What do you want to achieve)	INDICATORS (How do you know that you have done what you want to do)	TARGET (What is the target value)	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	TIMELINE (Year 2020)												MEANS OF VERIFICATION	RESPONSIBLE
					J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D		
Sensitization of Religious, Traditional and Community Leaders	Number of religious, traditional and community leaders sensitized		Religious, Traditional and Community Leaders become aware of the benefits of NiCare and how they can influence their subjects to enroll into the scheme.	Increased enrollment of community members into the scheme													Reports, Pictures, Attendance sheet, Videos, Social media posts (Facebook and Twitter)	Niger State Contributory Health Agency (NGSCHA)
Sensitization of the legislators (state house of assembly and LGA councils)	Number of legislators that have pledged to provide financial coverage for community members Percentage of funds released from the budget		Legislators commit to cover for indigent people in the state / LGA Timely release of funds at the state and LGA	Increased enrollment of indigent people in the state / LGA Increased budgetary allocation and timely release of funds													State and LGA Budget documents	NGSCHA
Sensitization of the Local Government Executives	Number of Local Government Executives sensitized		Local Government Executives become aware of the benefits of NiCare and how they can serve as advocates to people in their local government areas.	Increased enrollment of Local Government Executives and their staffs into the scheme Increased enrollment of community members													Reports, Pictures, Attendance sheet, Videos, Social media posts (Facebook and Twitter)	Niger State Contributory Health Agency (NGSCHA)
Sensitization of CSOs	Number of CSOs sensitized		CSOs become aware of the benefits of NiCare and how they can serve as advocates of the scheme in their respective campaigns.	Increased advocacy and awareness creation of the scheme by CSOs and coalitions													Reports, Pictures, Attendance sheet, Videos, Social media posts (Facebook and Twitter)	Niger State Contributory Health Agency (NGSCHA)
Sensitization of recognized/registered associations and groups	Number of recognized/registered associations and groups sensitized		Recognized/registered associations and groups become aware of the benefits of NiCare to their members and businesses, and to facilitate the enrollment of their members.	Increased enrollment of recognized/registered associations and groups													Reports, Pictures, Attendance sheet, Videos, Social media posts (Facebook and Twitter)	Niger State Contributory Health Agency (NGSCHA)



MEDIUM-TERM GOAL

The work plan should be updated regularly

10.0 Work Plan

A work plan is a simple document that outlines objectives of a project or program, activities tailored towards achieving the set objectives and a time frame to perform those activities as shown in Table 6. The work plan should be updated regularly. It is important to note that the work plan must be developed with a monitoring and evaluation framework as shown in Table 5, this is to keep track and ensure that the intended outcomes are monitored.



KEY ACTION...

It's necessary to narrow down and prioritize stakeholders to focus and gather information on due to time constraints and limited resources

11.0 Annexes

The following annexes provide additional guidance, tools, and resources for rolling out key activities and components of the communication strategy. However, it's important to note that information provided is not intended to be prescriptive and should be adapted as needed based on specific context and circumstances.

Annex 1: Stakeholder Mapping and Analysis¹³

There are several essential key steps to conduct a stakeholder mapping and analysis which are outlined below:

1. **Develop a comprehensive list of stakeholders.** Identify a broad list of actors who have some level of connection to the primary objective of the scheme. This may include actors beyond the health sector such as policy makers, legislators, labor unions, and civil society organizations.
2. **Cut down the list by identifying priority stakeholders.** Given time constraints and limited resources, it's necessary to narrow down and prioritize stakeholders to focus and gather information on. These priority stakeholders should have direct interest or influence on the scheme. The process of prioritization can be done through consultations and discussion with key actors well familiar with the context. Once the priority stakeholders have been selected, develop a list of their contact details.
3. **Develop a reference table for priority stakeholders.** A reference table outlines the information and key elements/characteristics for consideration when data is collected on each priority stakeholder (See Table 8 for a template). Stakeholders are typically assessed based on the following elements (using a scale of 1-3):

¹³ Strategic Communication for Universal Health Coverage: Practical Guide, 2018, Joint Learning Network for Universal Health Coverage, Health Finance and Governance Project, Abt Associates, Results for Development.



KEY CONSIDERATION...

Process of prioritization can be done through consultations and discussion with key actors well familiar with the context

- a. **Name**
- b. **Role and organization**
- c. **Knowledge:** What is the stakeholder’s level of knowledge when it comes to the scheme and its objective?
- d. **Position:** Is the stakeholder in support of, against, or neutral when it comes to the scheme?
- e. **Interest:** What are the stakeholder’s interests? What is their level of interest (little to no interest, some interest, high interest, etc.)?
- f. **Alliances:** Does the stakeholder have potential individuals or organization they partner with in support of or against the primary objective?
- g. **Resources:** What level of resources (personnel, funding, political etc.) does the stakeholder have available to them or have the ability to mobilize in support of the scheme?
- h. **Influence:** What ability does the stakeholder have to influence actions taken in support of or against the objective of the scheme?

Table 7: Stakeholder Reference Table Template (The stakeholder reference table template will be addressed when the final document is being illustrated)

TASKS 3-4: STAKEHOLDER REFERENCE TABLE										
1. NAME	2. ROLE, ORGANIZATION	3. KNOWLEDGE	4. POSITION	5. INTERESTS		6. ALLIANCES	7. RESOURCES		8. INFLUENCE	9. POWER
		1 – no knowledge 2 – some knowledge 3 – significant knowledge	1 – opposed 2 – neutral 3 – supports	List of potential advantages, disadvantages 1 – little or no interest 2 – some interest 3 – significant interest		Individuals or organizations that collaborate	1 – Little or no resources/ability to mobilize 2 – some resources/ability to mobilize 3 – significant resources/ability to mobilize		1 – limited influence 2 – some influence 3 – significant influence	Average of 7A, 7B and 8
				5A. DESCRIPTION	5B. LEVEL		7A. QUANTITY	7B. MOBILIZE		



KEY ACTION...

Use findings generated to inform action planning, decision making, and ultimately how communication activities are rolled out

4. **Develop data collection tools.** Some of the information needed for the reference table may be already available (secondary data), however, in most cases, some data collection is required to ensure accuracy. A data collection tool can take various forms but what is most important is that what is used is most appropriate for the context. The use of surveys and/or questionnaires in interviews has been known to be effective. It's advised questions used should be clear and concise and the overall length reasonable (typically not more than 1 hour.) It is also ideal to pre-test the survey or questionnaire to see if any changes are needed before finalizing and using.
5. **Collect data and populate on reference table.** First compile existing information or resources available (secondary data). Thereafter collect primary data through conducting interviews and using the data collection tool(s) developed. Once all information has been collected, transfer and populate into the reference table.
6. **Analyze data collected and use findings.** Analyze data populated on reference table across the key elements (e.g. knowledge, influence, interest, etc.) and use findings generated to inform action planning, decision making, and ultimately how communication activities are rolled out (e.g. messaging, sensitization, etc.).

This analysis can be used as a basis to identify the primary audience (those whose perception or behaviors must change in order for communications strategy to prove successful) and the secondary audience (those whose perception or behaviors may contribute towards achieving communication strategy objectives)

The stakeholder list in Table 8 outlines all people and institutions with interests that are critical for the success of NGSCHS. The list was developed and reviewed with contributions from staff of the scheme, the Third-Party Administrators (TPAs), CSOs, representatives from the informal sector and market women associations, to name a few. Over time, if there is need to refine the list, conduct analysis, and further prioritize individuals or groups, the process outlined above can be used for this purpose.



Table 8: List of NGSCHS Stakeholders

NATIONAL	STATE	LGA
<p>FEDERAL AGENCIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FRSC • Immigration • Police (<i>Yansanda</i>) • Nigeria Airforce • Prisons • Federal Medical Center Bida • National Orientation Agency • National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) • National Primary Healthcare Development Agency (NPHCDA) <p>FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FOMWAN • CAN • ECWA • Anglican Communion • Nigeria Baptist Convention • Catholic Church • PFN <p>MEDIA (FEDERAL)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice of Nigeria • Nigeria Television Authority • Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria • News Agency of Nigeria. • Channels TV • Africa Independent Television • Daily Trust <p>EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (FEDERAL OWNED)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal University of Technology Minna • Federal Polytechnic Bida • Federal College of Education Kontagora • Federal College of Wildlife and Fisheries <p>ORGANISED PRIVATE SECTOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banks • Other large private companies 	<p>EXECUTIVES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of the Executive Governor • Health and Finance Actors • State Ministry of Health (SMoH) • State Primary Healthcare Development Agency (SPHCDA) • State Ministry of Finance (SMoF) • Drug and Commodities Management Agency • Hospital Management Board • Planning Commission • Ministry of Women Affairs <p>LEGISLATURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niger State House of Assembly <p>HEALTH FACILITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Hospital, New Busa • General Hospital, Minna • Ibrahim Babangida (IBB) Specialist Hospital • Standard Hospital • Imam Hospital • Bay Clinic • Nigeria Electricity Power Authority (NEPA) Hospital, Jaji • Mustapha Hospital <p>FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FOMWAN • NASFAT • JNI • Catholic Women Organization • JIBWIS • Imam's Forum • Catholic Women Organisation • Imam's Forum (Jumaat mosque) • Fitiyanu Islam • Muslim Students Society • Muslim Corpers Association of Nigeria (MCAN) • Women in Daawah 	<p>EXECUTIVES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGA Chairmen <p>LEGISLATURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGA Councils <p>HEALTH FACILITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Health Clinics • Basic Health Clinic. Kpakungu <p>COMMUNITY GROUPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emirs – <i>Sarki</i> • District Head – <i>Hakimi</i> • Village Head – <i>Dagaci</i> • Ward Head – <i>Mai ungwa</i> • Pastors • Imams • <i>Magiro</i> • <i>Sarki Tsafi</i> • <i>Yan Bori</i> • Ward Development Committees (WDCs) <p>INFORMAL SECTOR (LGA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association of Rice Farmers • Association of Yam Farmers • Association of Fish Farmers • Association of Cattle Rearers <p>SOCIAL GROUPS (LGA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Unions: Igbo, Yoruba, Ibira, Kambari, Gbagyi, Mayetti Allah, Youth Groups, Edumana (Bida), Kyoda (Kontagora)



Table 8: List of NGSCHS Stakeholders continued

NATIONAL	STATE	LGA
<p>PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Association of Women Journalists (NAWO) • Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) • Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) • Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) • Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN) • Medical and Health Workers Union (NHW) • Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT) • Trade Union Congress (TUC) • Nigeria Labour Congress (NUC) • Association of People Living With Disabilities • Association of Building Material Sellers • Association of Local Barbers • Association of Retirees 	<p>FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HUFAZ • CNH • Khadiriyya • NAFES • Nigerian Christian Corpers' Fellowship (NCCF) <p>POLITICAL PARTIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All political parties in the state <p>INFORMAL SECTOR (STATE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Women Association (Trade union of all market associations) • National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) (NARTO, Heavy Duty Vehicles) • Association of Commercial Cyclist Riders of Nigeria (ACCOMORAN) • Association of Vulcanizers and Mechanics • Amalgamated Union of Artisans • Keke Napep • Okada Riders • National Union of Local Government (NULGE) • National Automobile Technician Association (NATA) • Road Transport Employers Association of Nigeria (RTEAN) • Corporative Societies <p>SOCIAL GROUPS (STATE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports clubs (<i>Dambe</i>) <p>MEDIA (STATE-FOCUSED)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radio Niger • Newline newspaper • Niger State TV • Crystal Radio • Prestige Radio • Ultimate FM • Search FM • TVC News • Blueprint • Daily Trust 	



Table 8: List of NGSCHS Stakeholders Continued

NATIONAL	STATE	LGA
	<p>EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (STATE OWNED)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IBB University • Niger State Polytechnic • College of Education • School of Agriculture • School of Nursing • School of Midwifery • Power Training Institute <p>CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Promoter • Pearl's Care Initiative • ISODAF • Diocesan Health Initiative • Child-to-Child • Centre for Communication and Reproductive Health Services (CCRHS) • INCREASE <p>PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ) • Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) • Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) • Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) • Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN) • Medical and Health Workers Union (NHW) • Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT) • Trade Union Congress (TUC) • Nigeria Labour Congress (NUC) • Association of People Living With Disabilities • Association of Building Material Sellers • Association of Local Barbers • Association of Retirees 	



KEY ACTION...

Identify and consider what the stakeholder audience values

Annex 2: Messaging¹⁴

There are several key elements to developing key messages tailored to priority stakeholders. They are as following:

1. **Identify a theme that connects with the audience or stakeholder you're trying reach.**

A theme is a topic of interest that aligns with audience's needs or concerns and is the foundation for message development. For example, if your overall objective is to increase enrollment into the scheme and your audience's main concern is the high cost of care, the theme might be '*Ensuring Affordable Health Care for Your Family*'. This theme addresses the audience concern of high costs by highlighting affordability.

2. **Develop messages.** There are multiple ways of developing effective messages. One of such approaches is the Message Box Approach, which consists of four key components:

- a. **Value:** First identify and consider what the stakeholder audience values. This helps make a connection with the audience because it shows there's an understanding of where they are coming from and what their experiences are.

TIPS FOR MESSAGING

1. **Keep content and language simple, concise, and to the point.** There usually aren't more than 3 main points being made through a message.
2. **Pre-test and Re-test.** Pre-test messages with a few actors from your target audience to make sure they're effective. If needed, you may retest the messaging at some point to see if changes or revisions are necessary.
3. **Emphasize on action.** Messages should focus on bringing about change through a call to action.

¹⁴ Strategic Communication for Universal Health Coverage: Practical Guide, 2018, Joint Learning Network for Universal Health Coverage, Health Finance and Governance Project, Abt Associates, Results for Development.



KEY CONSIDERATION...

Determine and address potential barriers or challenges that may hinder the stakeholder from engaging.

- b. **Barrier:** It's important to determine and address potential barriers or challenges that may hinder the stakeholder from engaging. The barrier itself should not be stated (as that would just refresh it in the stakeholder's mind) but it instead can be addressed by providing an option or solution that wouldn't be contested. For example, if the barrier to enrolling in the scheme is high costs, then low cost and affordable premiums should be captured in the messaging
 - c. **Ask:** Pass across one clear action the audience should take that is specific and aligned with the objective of the communication strategy.
 - d. **Vision:** Communicate to the audience an ideal vision of what their life would look like if they carry out the ask above. It's important this vision align with the vision identified (point A).
3. **Identify Messengers:** Once the messages have been developed, it's beneficial to identify suitable messengers who can push the message to the audience. Messengers usually are individuals, groups, or organization who deliver the messages to the specific audience and can be community or religious leaders. What is most important in selecting a messenger is ensuring they can connect with the audience in question. In some cases, messengers selected may need to be further oriented or sensitized to play their role.

**TIPS FOR MANAGING
OPPOSITION IN MESSAGING**

The following tips are helpful when encountering opposition with stakeholders. (However it's important to note that addressing opposition may not be necessary if it is not having an impact on your priority audience).

1. **Change the course of the conversation:** Draw attention to your strongest point or something you and the other party agree upon, so the focus is less on the opposing opinion.
2. **Keep responses short and highlight main point:** Avoid as much as possible spending time trying to argue against points; control the conversation and focus on what you'd like to speak on.
3. **Practice and be prepared:** Proactively think through potential issues or concerns the opposition may have and have responses ready



KEY ACTION...

Pass across one clear action the audience should take that is specific and aligned with the objective of the communication strategy.

Table 9 provides a template that can be used to develop messaging for priority stakeholders. Table 10 additionally provides sample messaging and associated communication channels for NiCare scheme’s target audiences

Table 9 Template to Develop Key Messages
(The template to develop key messages will be addressed when the final document is being illustrated)

DECISIONS TO MAKE		PRIMARY AUDIENCE
THEME: Your theme will guide solid messaging that reaches your audience and reinforces the core concern you want to tap.		
MESSAGE: What key points do you want to make with each target audience?	TAP VALUE (positive statement that aligns with their values)	
	OVERCOME THE BARRIER (your response to their potential disagreement)	
	ASK (one specific thing you want them to do)	
	ECHO VISION (what the world looks like if they do what you want them to do)	
MESSENGERS: Who will best connect with the audience? Who is the social reference group for the audience on your issue?		



SAMPLE MESSAGING

NiCare’s goal is for you and your family to have access to quality health care at an affordable cost

Table 10: Sample Messaging

TARGET AUDIENCE	COMMUNICATION CHANNELS	SAMPLE MESSAGING
State House of Assembly (Legislature)	Print Media, Radio, TV, Social Media	<p>The law established an agency (NiCare) to move the state towards UHC by enrolling all residents of Niger State into the contributory scheme. For sustainability of Nicare, the Honourable members can support in the following ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work closely with the executive to ensure that NiCare budget and 1% consolidated revenue for the vulnerable are appropriated and released in a timely manner every year. 2. Serve as Nicare champions in communities. This they can do by speaking to the people about the benefits of Nicare and paying premiums for people who cannot afford to within their constituency.
Community Groups	Town hall meetings, Radio, One on One Communication, Social Media (WhatsApp), TV	<p>Can you remember the last time a woman in this community was in Labour, rushed to the health facility but refused treatment because her family did not have money to pay? Do you remember the difficult experience the family had as a result? This is why every member of this community should enroll in the Niger state contributory health Scheme.</p> <p>NiCare is a scheme whose goal is for you and your family to have access to quality health care at an affordable cost so you can prevent falling sick, get treatment & recover when sick, and help you stay healthy. You pay a small amount of money every year and this allows you to go to the health centre nearest you and get good treatment from the doctors and nurses, without paying at the facility.</p> <p>To enjoy this, register with NiCare and pay N7200, you can also register up to 6 family members for N500.</p> <p>If you work with the government, 2.5% of your basic salary will be deducted every month and the government will contribute 2.5% of your basic salary.</p>



SAMPLE MESSAGING ...

Know about the Niger State Contributory Health Scheme (NiCare)

Table 10: Sample Messaging continued

TARGET AUDIENCE	COMMUNICATION CHANNELS	SAMPLE MESSAGING
Artisans (Carpenters, Keke Napep / Okada riders, NURTW, NARTO)	Town hall meetings, Radio, TV, Print Media	<p>Have you realized that most artisans on a daily basis spend money in buying different medications to make them feel stronger so they can do their jobs? Have you added up the amount you spent buying those medications and what that amount can get for you in terms of quality healthcare? While we do not pray for bad things to happen, however there are accidents that happen that could stop you from continuing your work as a driver. This is why you need to know about the Niger State Contributory health scheme. (NiCare)</p> <p>NiCare is a scheme whose goal is for you and your family to have access to quality health care at an affordable cost so you can prevent falling sick, get treatment & recover when sick, and help you stay healthy. You pay a small amount of money and this allows you to go to the health centre nearest you when you are sick and get good treatment from the doctors and nurses, without paying at the facility.</p> <p>To enjoy this, register with NiCare and pay N7200, you can also register up to 6 family members for N500.</p>



KEY DATE...

Law establishing NiCare was passed by the Niger State House of Assembly on December 19, 2018

Annex 3: Sample Press Release Template of Launch of the Scheme

CONTACT:

Name:

Position:

Phone number:

Email:

For Immediate Release

Date:

TITLE: Affordable Healthcare for Niger State Residents

- The Executive Secretary of NiCare to launch health scheme
- Scheme to cover everyone in Niger State
- Scheme to cost only 7,200 naira every year!!

Minna/Niger State

In a groundbreaking move, the government of Niger State will launch its contributory health scheme on November 6, 2019 at the Old State Secretariat Complex, in Minna.

Executive Secretary of the Scheme, Dr. Usman Mohammed says the Scheme is important in order to ensure health coverage for Niger residents. “We believe that this launch will be the beginning of Niger State’s journey towards universal health coverage,” he said.

The Law establishing the Scheme was passed by the Niger State House of Assembly on December 19, 2018 and was assented to by the His Excellency, the Governor, Alhaji Abubakar Sani Bello on January 09, 2019. Niger State is one of 20 States in Nigeria that have enacted State Health Insurance Laws.



NiCare is meant to provide health coverage for civil servants through deduction of 2.5% of their basic salary monthly, in addition to government's contribution of the same amount



NiCare is meant to provide health coverage for civil servants through deduction of 2.5% of their basic salary monthly, in addition to government's contribution of the same amount. Non-civil servants will be required to pay 7,200 naira per person every year.

Some benefits of this Scheme include...

At the assent to the Law establishing the Scheme, the Governor said that this government is committed to health for all residents of Niger State. "This is the dawn of a new era in Niger State's health sector," he said.

The launch will take place at the NiCare Conference Hall, at 10am. For further inquiries, please contact:

Name:

Position:

Phone number:

Email:

For the Office of the Executive Secretary, NiCare:



KEY CONSIDERATION...

Social media campaigns should always focus on the problem, solution, and call to action

Annex 4: Guidance and Tips for Posting and Managing Social Media Accounts (Blogs, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook)

A. *Some Questions to Ask*

1. How many of you have social media handles? (Number of those on twitter, Number of those on Facebook)
2. Why do you want the scheme to be on social media?
3. Who are those you will like to reach on social media?

B. *What is a social media toolkit?*

A social media toolkit contains all the information's that can be used to publicize campaigns on social media platforms.

Social media campaigns should always focus on the problem, solution, and call to action.

C. *What goes inside a social media toolkit?*

A good toolkit should contain a checklist of five essential elements:

I. **Put Videos to work**

Videos are an extremely effective way to spread awareness about your campaign or donation drive on social media.

Duration of Twitter videos is 2 minutes 20 seconds

II. **Leverage stories and data**

Use stories to connect with followers on an emotional level.

If your campaign is directed at solving a problem, give the people a chance to share their stories. When possible, let the people whose lives have been improved share their own stories. Package these elements into your social media toolkit via videos, copy, and images.

If you can, include data and statistics as well.



KEY CONSIDERATION....

Use hashtags to interact with people over social media, and make your campaign or donation drive more recognizable.

III. Know who to tag

Tagging people to your post on social media signifies to someone that you're talking about them, giving them a head's up about something, and or would like them to respond.

IV. A few good hashtags

Hashtags are an essential part of the social media toolkit template; they can help build interest and unite user-generated content around your efforts. You can use hashtags to interact with people over social media, and make your campaign or donation drive more recognizable.

Distinguishing between @tag and #tag If you're at an event and you hear someone using your name or they call out to you, that's equivalent to using an @ tag. If you join a conversation about a subject you're interested in and welcome other people to join you by speaking loudly enough for them to overhear, that's equivalent to using an # tag.

V. Attention-grabbing photos

You can social media campaigns by adding relevant photos and infographics:

Create branded logos, banners, and profile pictures for your social media accounts.

Compile campaign data into easy-to-read infographics. Take various photos for each campaign that help generate awareness.

VI. Written content

Simplify the writing process by coming up with templates for your content. This should include a brief message about your campaign, any relevant hashtags, and a date if needed.



KEY ACTION...

Don't forget to add a call-to-action to your toolkit that urges followers to complete your desired action

Here's an example of a template you could add to your social media toolkit:

"Join us in supporting (name of cause) on (date of event). Together, we can make a difference by (goal of campaign). For more info, visit (link to website/fundraising page) (hashtag)"

If you're posting on *Twitter*, be sure to limit your content to 280 characters. Don't forget to add a call-to-action to your toolkit that urges followers to complete your desired action, like registering for an upcoming event or donating money.

Other useful components include:

Links to your website, blog, landing pages, and social media profiles

Contact information like email addresses, phone numbers, and physical addresses

A list of your sponsors and partners that includes their branded logos and links to their websites.

VII. How do you increase your impact on social media?

Be ready to answer questions, repost or retweet comments



KEY ACTION...

Be ready to answer questions, repost or retweet comments on social media channels

Annex 5: Modules for Communications Strategy Development Capacity Building

TRAINING MODULES

1. *Communications Strategy Framework for NiCare*

- a. Defining a Communications Strategy
- b. Stakeholder Segmentation
- c. Power Mapping: Who has the influence
- d. Assets: What do you have in your hands
- e. Communications Channels
- f. Developing Your Communications Strategy
- g. Deploying Your Communications Strategy
- h. Evaluating Your Communications Strategy

2. *Developing IEC Materials for NiCare*

- a. Content Development
- b. Infographics Development
- c. Social Media Toolkit Development
- d. Granting Radio Interviews
- e. Granting TV Interviews
- f. Developing Videos

ADDITIONAL STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION RESOURCES

- **Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health/Center for Communication Programs: A Field Guide to Designing a Health Communication Strategy:** A practical guide to design, implement, or support a strategic health communication initiative.
- **Chukumati Christiana Nkanunye and Georgy O Obiechina (2017). Health Communications Strategies as Gateway to Effective Health Promotion and Well-being:** Shares findings on how effective communication strategies can produce results such as behavior change or improved health.
- **WHO Strategic Communications Framework:** Provides a strategic approach for effectively communicating WHO information, advice, and guidance for health issues.



TO DO...

The communications team of NiCare will be responsible for leading and coordinating the implementation of the communications strategy

3. Quality Care: The foundation of good primary health care

- a. Why Quality Care is Important
- b. What is Patient Centred Care?
- c. How can Niger achieve quality patient centred care?

4. Public relations and interfacing with mainstream media

- a. Writing an effective press brief
- b. Conducting a media briefing event

5. Costing community engagement platforms

- a. TV appearances
- b. Radio shows
- c. Social media engagement
- d. Toll-free lines
- e. Media briefings

Annex 6: Terms of Reference for NGSCHA (NiCare) Communications Unit

The scheme agency's communications team will be responsible for leading and coordinating the implementation of the communications strategy and should be made up of a core team of not more than five individuals drawn from different units and departments within the Agency and to be led by a Director. Broadly these would include a graphics designer, social media manager, communications manager, event logistics manager and a media content manager.

The communications team's major responsibility will be to lead the implementation of this communication strategy in the short-term, medium-term and long-term and report to the Executive Secretary.



KEY CONSIDERATION....

Use hashtags to interact with people over social media, and make your campaign or donation drive more recognizable.

The following are terms of reference for the communications unit adapted from 'Communications Committee Terms of Reference'¹⁵:

- Ensure effective communication in the delivery of NiCare to all the residents of Niger State, and stakeholder groups, including public, private, and community groups.
- Review, agree and monitor communication processes and performance for the Niger State Contributory Health Agency.
- Promote accountability, transparency, and value for money in developing and implementing costed communications activities for NiCare.
- Ensure that all communications about NiCare Scheme is evidence-based to enhance decision-making.
- Report recommendations to the Executive Secretary Niger State Contributory Health Agency and Top Management Committee through a Director
- Develop, implement, monitor and evaluate agreed action plans for the communications unit
- Identify NiCare's communications needs and priorities through consultation and research.
- Develop and implement an effective protocol for dealing with media enquiries and content dissemination
- Oversee the effective running of the Agency's webpage, social media handles using branded and specific messaging.
- Liaise with the other NiCare departments to ensure that relevant protocols are in place for proper coordination of communications.
- Build partnerships with key stakeholders within the media and communications landscape
- Participate in courses, peer review mechanisms or platforms that will help them deliver on their mandates
- Conduct training of trainers by stepping down messaging and other information from NiCare

¹⁵ Communication Committee Terms of Reference. Adapted from [https://ajc-ajj.net/24-governance/05-subcommittees/05-communications-committee/e-CommunicationsTeam_Terms_of_Reference_\(Nov_17_2011\)_-Final.pdf](https://ajc-ajj.net/24-governance/05-subcommittees/05-communications-committee/e-CommunicationsTeam_Terms_of_Reference_(Nov_17_2011)_-Final.pdf) [Accessed on January 23, 2020]

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