

# TELL ME Communication Kit

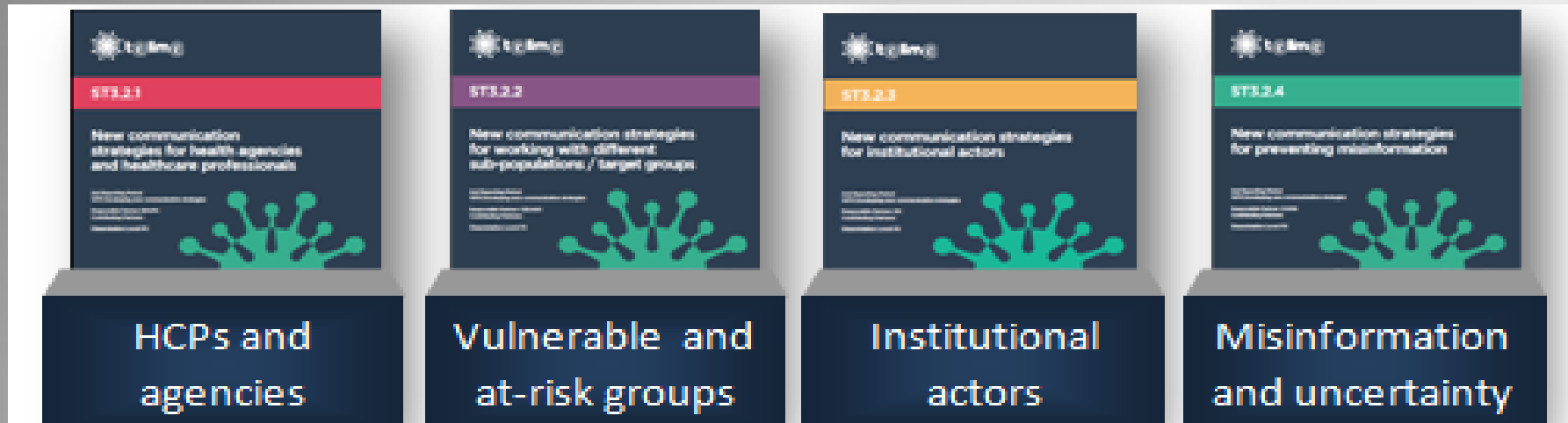
(Practical Guide for Risk and Outbreak Communication)

British Medical Journal Publishing Group | CEDARThree | Istituto Superiore di Sanità | Zadig Srl.

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experience, delivering effective Messages, providing Evidence

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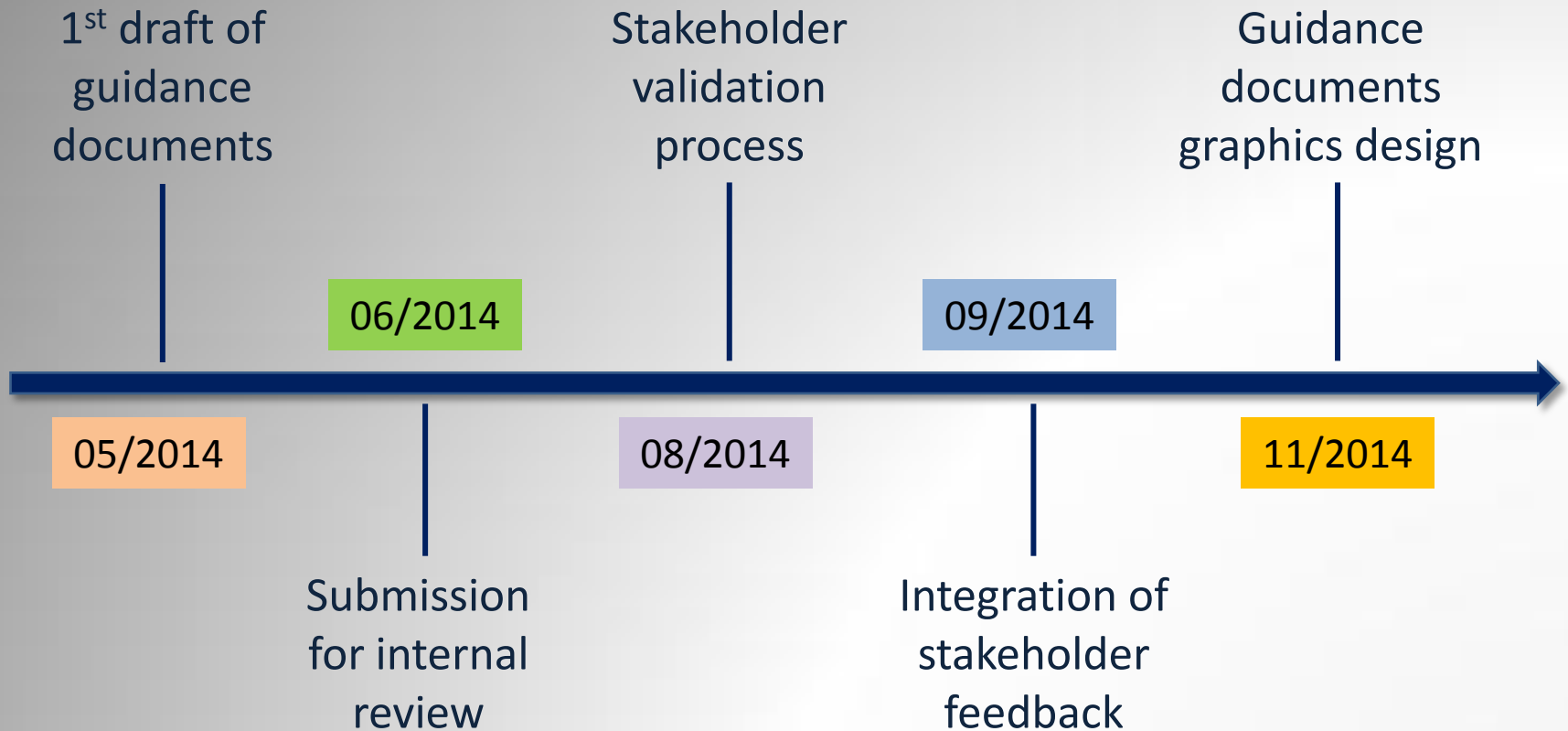


## Overall objective:

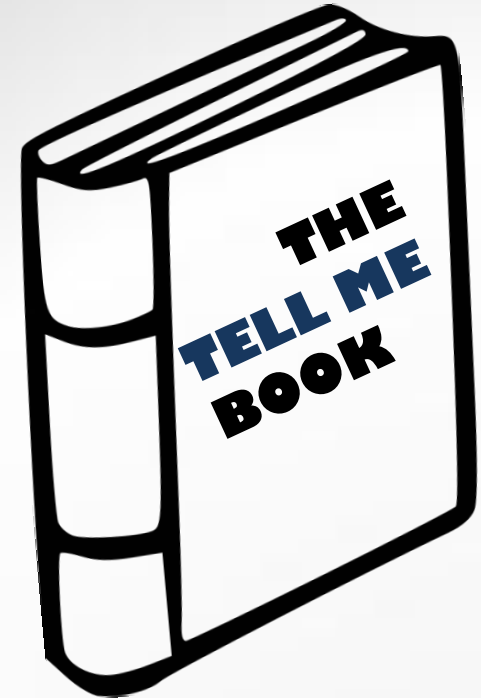
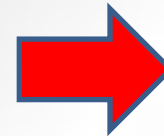
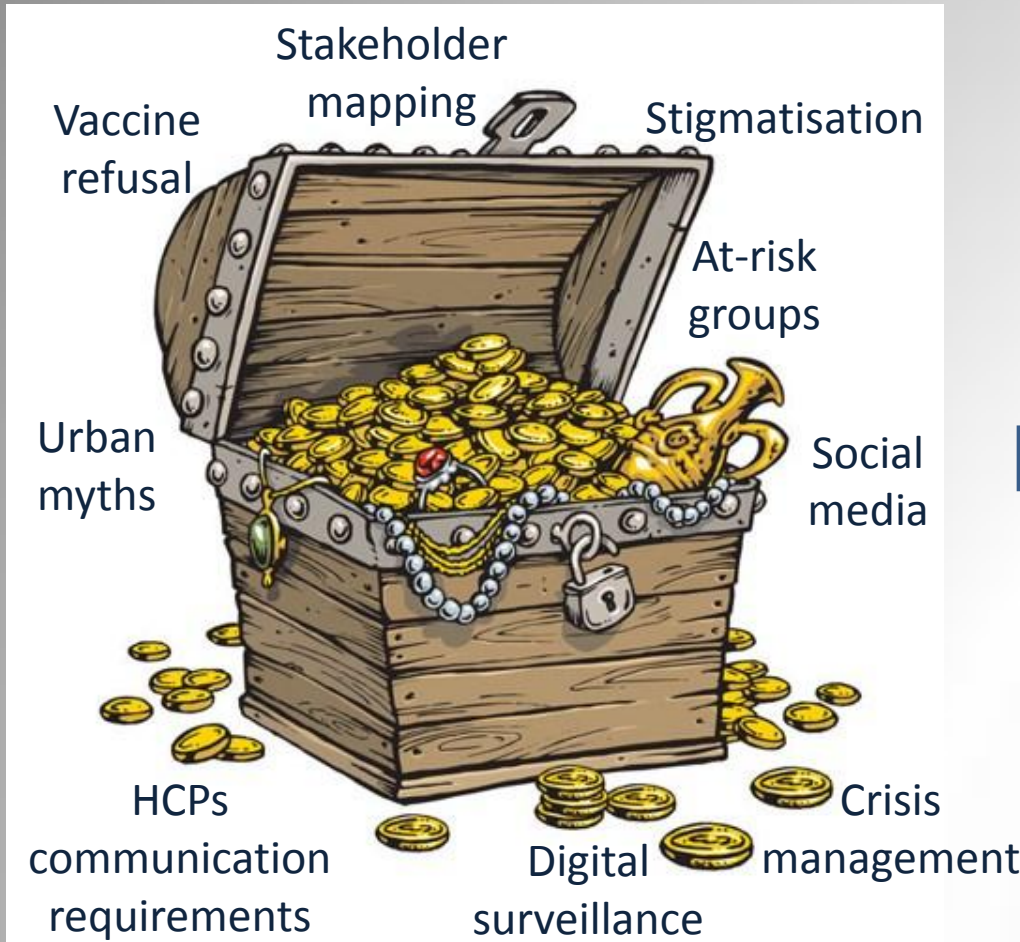
Develop communication strategies and offer practical recommendations and tools for risk communication across different phases of the pandemic, with the aim to minimise deviations between perceived and intended messages.

## Target audience:

- Public health officials
- Risk managers
- Pandemic planners
- Health care professionals



# The TELL ME (hidden) treasure



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Population behaviour during epidemics

New challenges for risk communication



HCPs and agencies



Vulnerable and at-risk groups



Institutional actors



Misinformation and uncertainty

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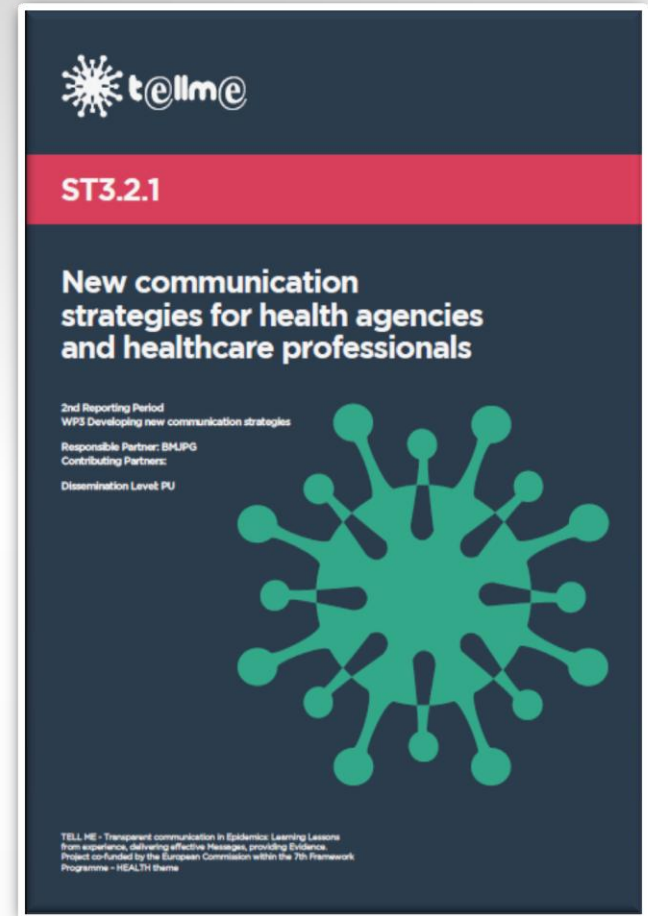
- Collect and evaluate evidence from the scientific literature
- Build on components presented in the TELL ME Framework Model
- Suggest how could theoretical concepts be applied into practice
- Highlight basic principles and good practices for risk communication
- Provide tools and templates to support the communication process
- Recommendations for development of messages in various contexts

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Communication strategies for increasing vaccine uptake among healthcare professionals and engaging with vaccine-resistant groups during infectious disease outbreaks.



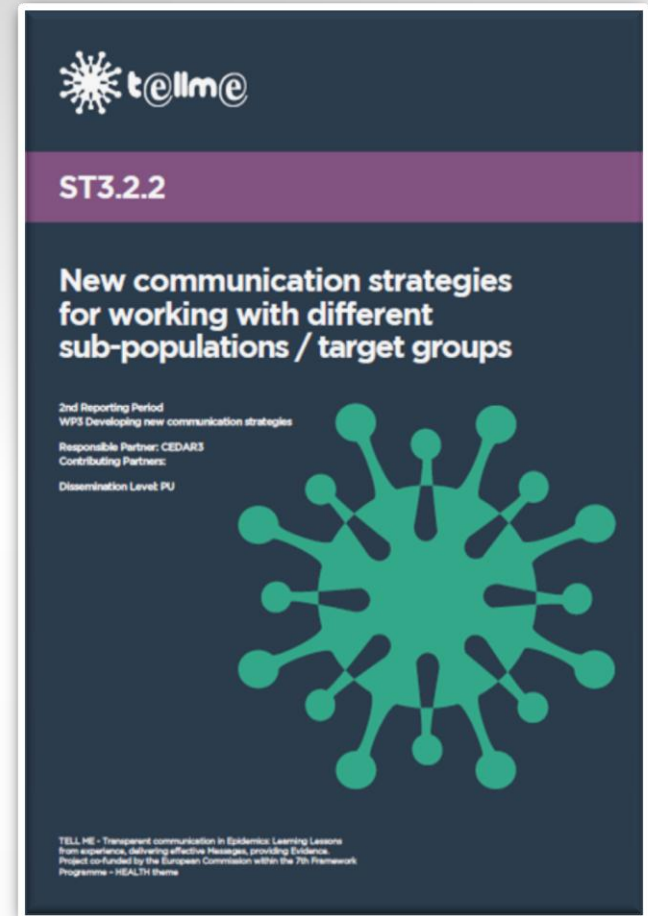
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Communication strategies for working with vulnerable populations and at-risk groups recommended for immunisation across the EU countries.



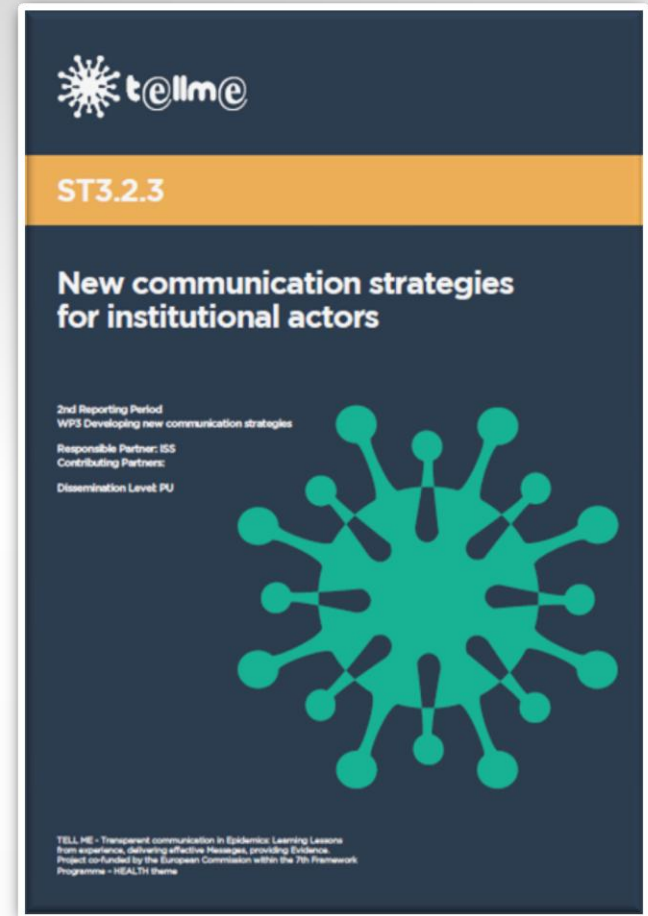
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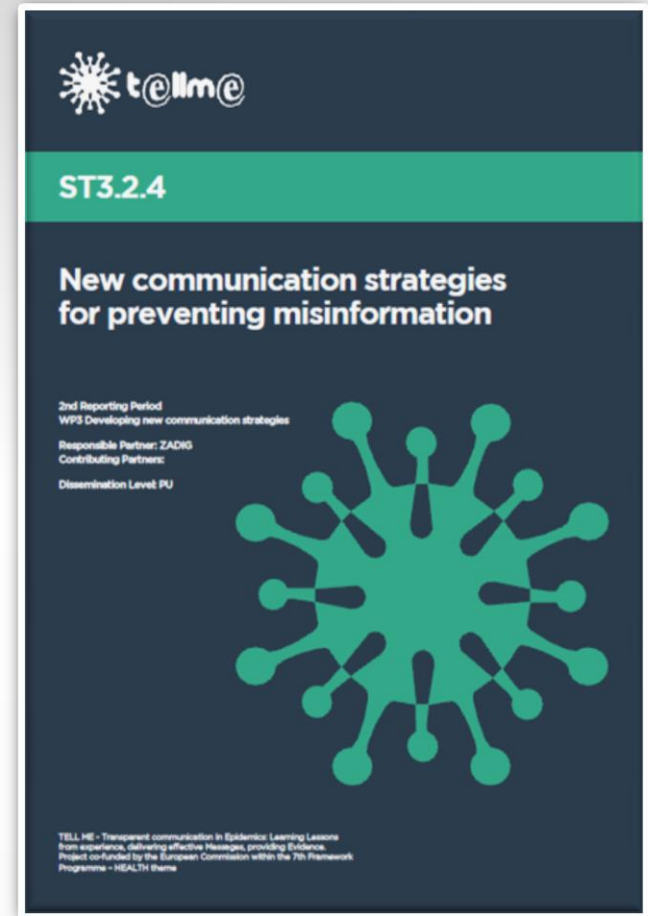
Communication strategies for institutional actors to engage more effectively with populations' behavioural responses in the event of an epidemic or pandemic.



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Communication strategies for better preparedness and prevention against the emergence and spread of misinformation in pandemics.



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- ✓ Guidance documents may serve as base material for the preparation of future pandemic preparedness and response plans
- ✓ No infectious disease outbreak is the same, however it is crucial to establish a set of basic principles and standards for risk communication
- ✓ Dynamic nature of pandemics > Communication strategy and messages to be tailored according to:
  - ✓ Contextual factors (e.g. socio-economical, political, cultural)
  - ✓ Situational factors (e.g. epidemiological data, infrastructure)

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...a bit of perspective from

# ST3.2.4 Guidance Document

New communication strategies  
for preventing misinformation

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- Provide background context in relation to potential sources and origins of misinformation
- Describe the conditions that foster the emergence of misinformation
- Explain the mechanisms that create the persistent effect for misinformation and rumours
- Discuss the critical role of opinion leaders and social media to help control the spread of misinformation
- Present good practices for prevention and strategies to counter misinformation in the course of a pandemic

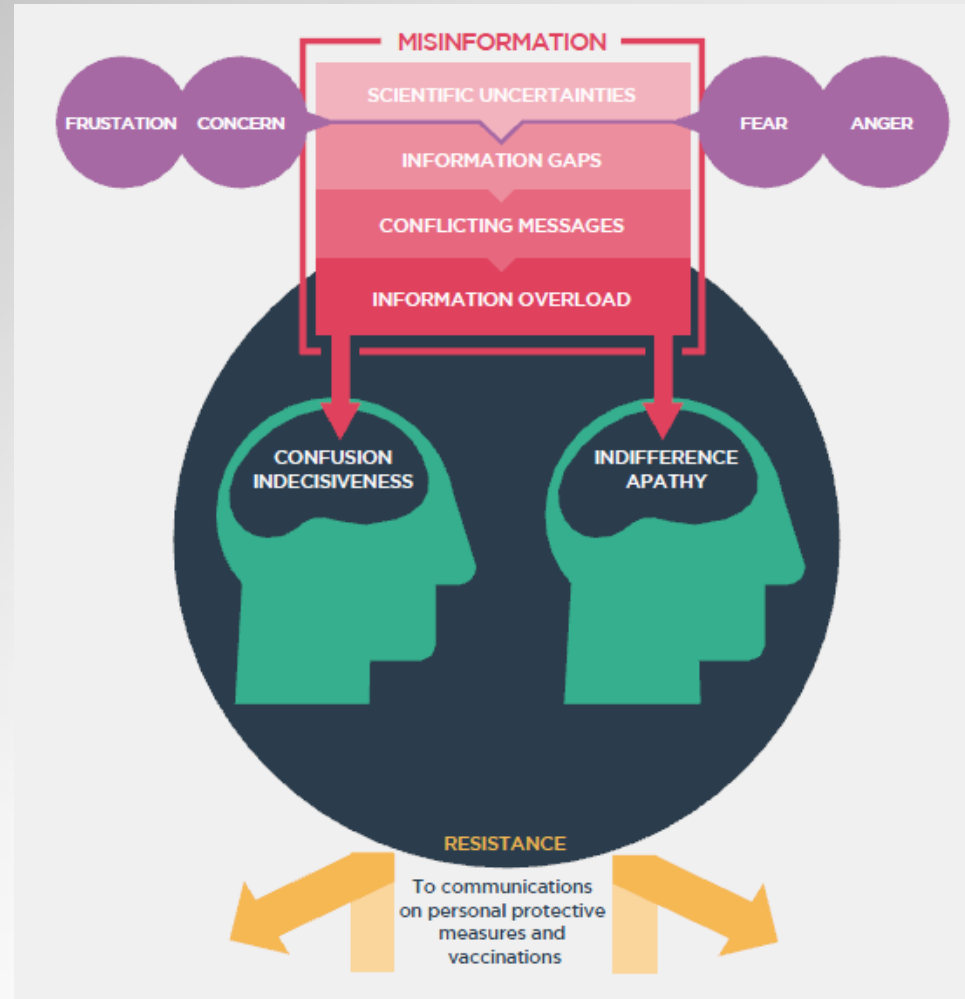
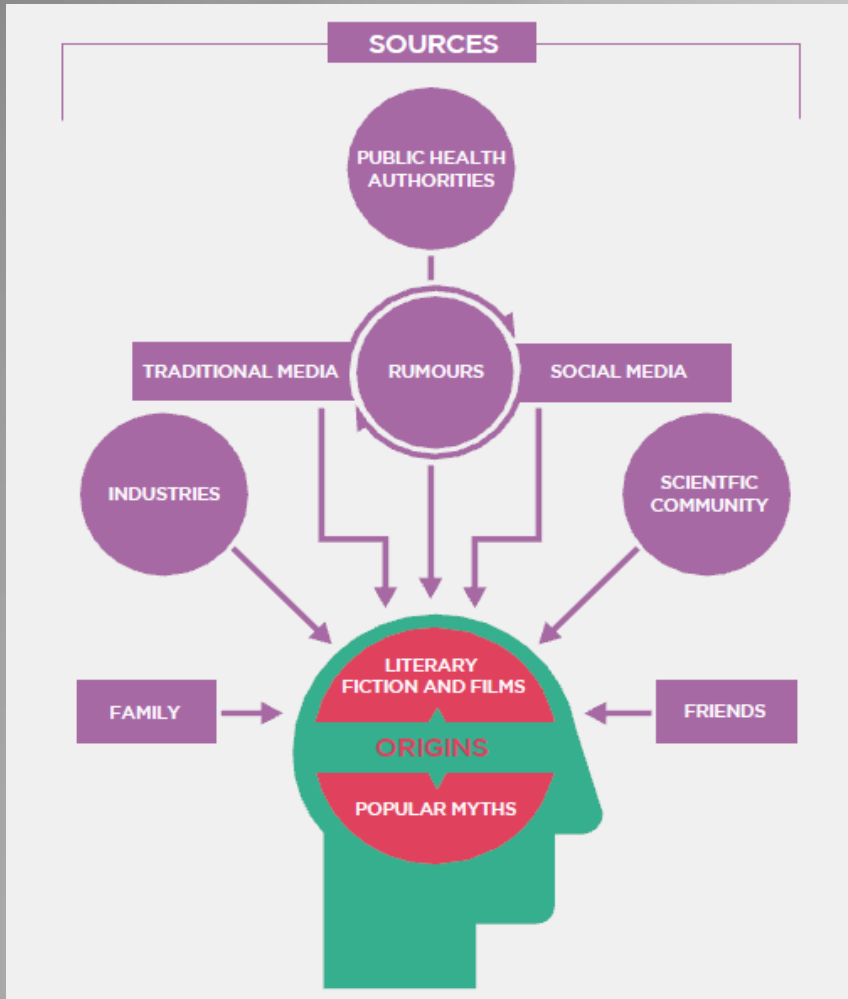
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*The unintentional spread of erroneous or inaccurate information, which could have a major and direct impact on perceptions and attitudes toward public health measures related to an infectious disease outbreak, with the effect of creating delays in response, spread of damaging rumours, inadequate resource allocation, misdirected efforts and ultimately, unnecessary loss of life.*

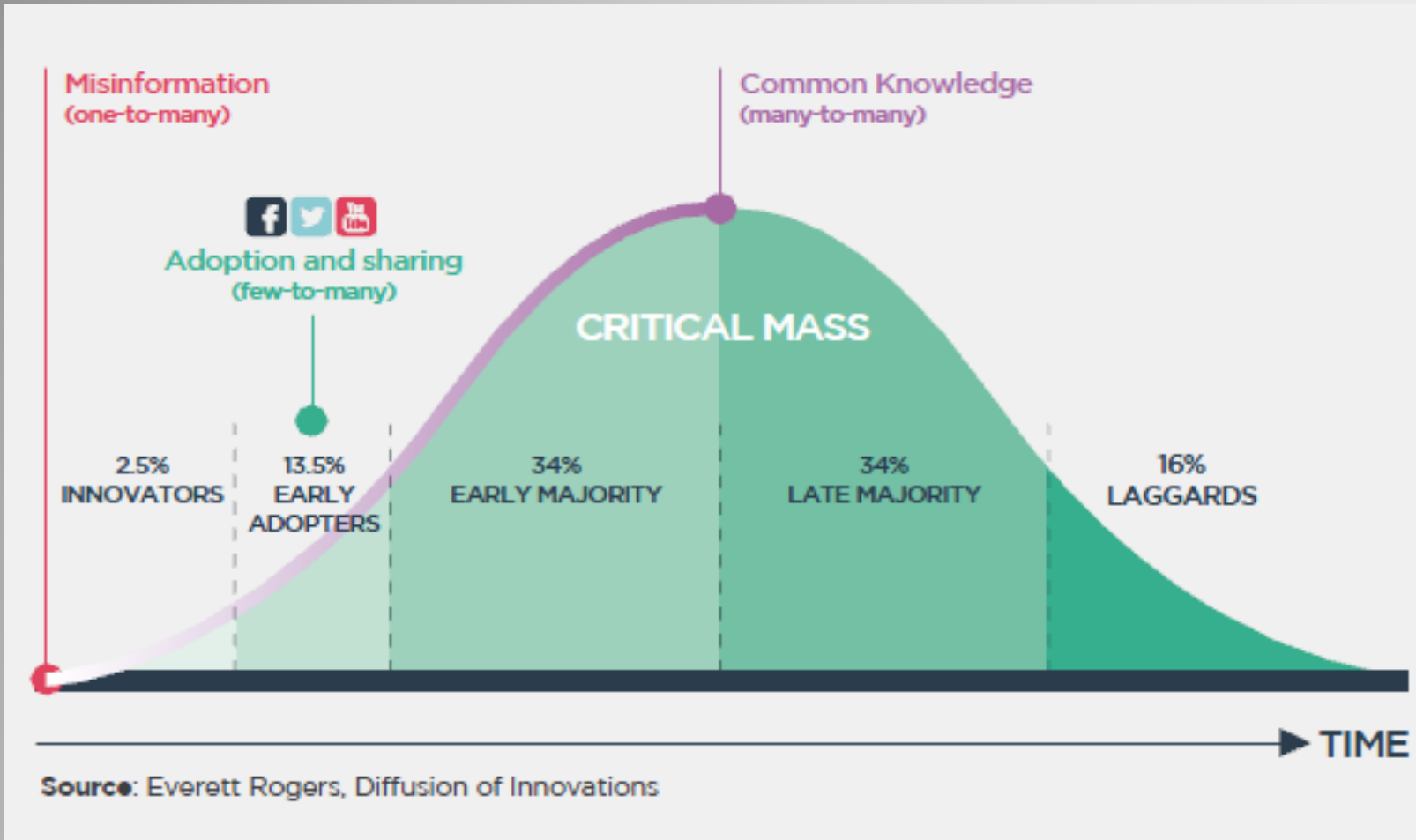
**- WHO (2009) -**



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## Misinformation and myths in relation to the influenza virus

### PERSONAL CONCERN

- The swine flu is just a bad cold / The swine flu is annoying but harmless / The symptoms are like the seasonal flu.
- This is a mild flu, death rates are lower than seasonal flu.
- It is unlikely for healthy adults and young people to get the swine flu.
- The swine flu can prove to be dangerous only for the elderly / pregnant women.
- The swine flu does not pose a major threat for children over 5 years old.
- The swine flu is transmitted by pork products / Someone could catch the swine flu by simply being around pigs.
- By shaking hands with people, one could spread/get the swine flu.
- Only those who live in cold weather regions can get the swine flu.
- Immunity is conferred by contracting the swine flu.
- A person cannot get the flu twice during the same season.
- It is better to get the swine flu at early stages while the symptoms are mild, than risk catching it later or getting vaccinated.

### GENERAL CONCERN

- The swine flu is man-made.
- The swine flu was intended as a weapon of mass destruction.
- The swine flu is an excuse for mass vaccination.
- Governments wanted to create a global crisis.
- Governments wanted to use the H1N1 strain as beta test / a biological warfare agent.
- Once this pandemic is over, the humanity is safe for another few decades.
- The H1N1 outbreak is declared a pandemic, therefore millions will die.
- Outbreaks like the swine flu pandemic are inevitable and cannot be prevented.

### VACCINE-RELATED

- The flu can be transmitted from the vaccine.
- The flu vaccines are dangerous / more dangerous than the H1N1 virus.
- Squalene, ingredient of the flu vaccine used as a booster, caused the Gulf War Syndrome.
- Thimerosal, ingredient of the flu vaccine used as a preservative, contains mercury, a poisonous substance responsible for autism and other developmental disorders.
- Flu vaccines cause the Guillain-Barré Syndrome.
- Flu vaccines actually weaken the immune system weaker, making people less able to withstand viruses on their own, same as the antibiotics leading to the creation of more resistant viruses.
- Governments plan to make mandatory vaccinations for people against the H1N1 virus.
- If someone gets vaccinated against regular flu each year, there is no need then to get vaccinated for the swine flu.
- The flu vaccine needs to be administered before November (or December), in order for it to be effective.

### NON-VACCINE RELATED

- It is enough that someone just eats organic food, takes vitamins, wears a mask, washes hands and drinks plenty of liquids.
- Face masks alone can protect someone from the swine flu.
- Bringing a child to a 'swine flu party' is the better option for building a natural immunity to the virus.
- There is no treatment for the flu.
- Antibiotics can effectively fight the flu.
- Resting is the best treatment for the flu.

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## Social media / Online resources

- Identify which type of social networks and internet-based communication channels are mostly used or preferred by different audiences.
- Identify bloggers and online writers who are seen as a reliable source of information from the community.
- Establish and maintain presence on social media platforms and seek to provide incentives for people to keep visiting the official website and portals.
- Build a network of organisations and develop partnerships to diffuse health messages through the various web-based platforms used.
- Explore in advance the potential that each social media platform can offer and standardise the style of communication depending the media platform used.

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## Mass media

- Invite journalists and media representatives as legitimate stakeholders to contribute in the development of future pandemic preparedness and response plans.
- Establish an 24/7 “enquiry point” for journalists to verify information or rumours that circulate online.
- Organise joint workshops for journalists and health professionals with a focus on communication aspects and the impact of misinformation during infectious disease outbreaks.

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## Opinion leaders

- Identify individuals who are seen as trustworthy members within a community and have the capacity to influence behaviour of others.
- Identify opinion leaders with active presence in social media and definite views on public health issues.
- Establish relationships with public figures that have a large public following in social media with the aim to recruit as “ambassadors” in future public health campaigns.

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## General public

- Promote initiatives to further improve health literacy skills and knowledge.
- Consider how cultural diversity within the population can influence reaction and response to disease or death.
- Consider the influence of tradition and customs in response to recommended health measures (what makes cultural sense vs. what makes health sense).

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# THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION !!!

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