

# Beneficiary Communications Evaluation

Haiti Earthquake Operation 2011



Listeners of  
Radyo Kwa  
Wouj say it  
provides  
useful and  
practical  
information

Prepared by Catherine Chazaly – Evaluation Team Leader *July 2011*



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*Strategy 2020* voices the collective determination of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to move forward in tackling the major challenges that confront humanity in the next decade. Informed by the needs and vulnerabilities of the diverse communities with whom we work, as well as the basic rights and freedoms to which all are entitled, this strategy seeks to benefit all who look to Red Cross Red Crescent to help to build a more humane, dignified and peaceful world.

Over the next ten years, the collective focus of the IFRC will be on achieving the following strategic aims:

- 1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises**
- 2. Enable healthy and safe living**
- 3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace**

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## Foreword

**By Eduard Tschan, Country Director, Haiti Earthquake Operation**

The Haiti Earthquake Operation changed the way we communicate with beneficiaries.

For the first time, and just days after the disaster struck, a dedicated beneficiary communications delegate was embedded into the emergency operation. Beneficiary communications activities were highlighted in the Plan of Action and each programme was supported with its own beneficiary communications strategy. Beneficiary communications became a programme in its own right.

Over the last eighteen months the programme has provided life-saving information on a wide variety of topics, from health, hygiene and cholera to weather alerts and hurricane preparedness tips. It has also evolved and increased its focus on two way communications as a way of giving Haitians a voice, ensuring their needs and opinions are represented in the recovery process.

Built on learning from the Asian Tsunami the programme has developed and scaled up to embrace new tools and emerging technologies in a bid to open up a dialogue with our beneficiaries, reaching more people, more quickly and more cost effectively.

While this evaluation highlights the impressive impact of the programme so far – 96% of people found information from the Red Cross useful – there is clearly still work to be done, particularly in the area of increasing the means and amount of 2-way communication with our beneficiaries.

I am pleased to say that many developments are already being made towards this aim. A \$240,000 grant from the Humanitarian Innovation Fund will see the implementation of a new Interactive Voice Response (IVR) phone line in Haiti this November. This will replace the \*733, and as well as providing key information will allow people to take part in surveys simply through touching buttons on their phones, providing a free and easy way to get people's feedback.

The beneficiary communications programme will continue to make the most of new technology by reaching out to the young, tech-savvy Haitians through the new Kwa Wouj Twitter feed launched in October. This will also increase message reach by tapping into the growing TwitMobil subscribers.

The lack of knowledge and access to Radyo Kwa Wouj was addressed in July, when an additional show was launched on Haiti's most popular station Radio Caraibes. This additional hourly show follows the same successful format as the show on Radio 1. A country-wide advertising campaign is also being developed to promote both shows to new audiences.

# Beneficiary Communication

The beneficiary communications programme was also quick to recognise the importance of finding new channels to provide programme information, normally delivered through posters and this August the Red Cross sound truck hit the roads. So far the truck, a 4x4 with speakers, sound system and microphone has visited camps and communities throughout Port au Prince to inform the population about everything from water points closing, weather warnings, first aid tips and cholera prevention.

As the Haiti operations moves increasingly into the realm of recovery, I have no doubt the beneficiary communications programme will have a key role to play. Both in providing life-saving information and supporting programmes be accountable to their beneficiaries.



## Executive Summary

### Introduction

Communicating with beneficiaries has many benefits for a humanitarian operation. It saves lives, promotes dignity and trust in the operation and gives people a voice in decision-making, which in turn improves the effectiveness and efficiency of programmes.

The Haiti Earthquake Operation changed the way the Red Cross communicates with its beneficiaries by providing dedicated resources to develop a beneficiary communications programme, that makes the most of new technology and supports the organisation to be accountable to its beneficiaries.

This evaluation seeks to understand the impact of this programme through the eyes of the beneficiaries, whilst gaining a better understanding of Haitian information needs and channels.

### Who is getting information and how are they receiving it?

Word of mouth and radio are the preferred methods of communication in Haiti, reinforcing the importance of community workers and the Radyo Kwa Wouj radio show. Where social cohesion is high, information is shared and disseminated widely amongst a community, increasing the reach of Red Cross messages. Mobile phones are increasingly important for sharing information, so it's important Red Cross brands its messages clearly so they are recognised easily.

Women and the over 50's are the most information deprived and so particular effort needs to be made to reach these groups during communication campaigns. Unsurprisingly, the under 25's are the main users of new technology. However there are significant challenges in terms of access with many people facing restrictions due to literacy or location. The key determinant in choice of media lies in access to electricity, and this needs to be understood and accounted for when planning campaigns.

### Are we providing the information people want and need?

- 74% of the people interviewed reported receiving information from the Red Cross
- 96% said it was useful information
- 83% reported taking action after receiving the information
- 73% shared the information with others
- 10% have communicated back with the Red Cross

Clearly the beneficiary communication's programme aim of always providing practical and useful information is meeting the needs of Haitians. The evaluation found practical advice on health and weather hazards is most highly valued, most remembered and most likely to be shared. People also want clear information on Red Cross activities and support, even if it's 'bad news' such as the end of a service, people want to be kept informed. As programmes scale down this should be an area of concerted focus for beneficiary communications and will require the collaboration of operational colleagues. Additionally, more work is needed to develop more and better mechanisms for two-way communication to increase the number of people communicating back with the Red Cross.

## **The tools**

### **SMS; reaching millions at the click of a button**

SMS was recognised in the early stages of the operation as an ideal entry point for sharing information with the population. A partnership between Trilogy International Partners and the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement was established, allowing 45 million SMS to be sent since Jan 2010.

The levels of recognition of this service are encouraging. A quarter of people interviewed reported receiving information from the Red Cross through their phone; high for a mass media tool. Interestingly, only half of these people own a Voila phone, which indicates SMS are shared and passed on. But most significantly, 95% found the information useful and 90% reported they changed something in their life as a result of Red Cross information. People especially appreciated weather warnings, claiming they are not getting this from Haitian media, highlighting the need for even closer joint-working between beneficiary communications and the disaster management programme.

### **Taking to the airwaves; Radyo Kwa Wouj**

Globally, radio is recognized as one of the most accessible mediums. It allows for 2-way dialogue and cuts through literacy issues. On 14 July 2010 Radyo Kwa Wouj went live across Haiti, broadcasting from IFRC base camp in Port-au-Prince on the Radio 1 network. Since then, more than 60 shows have been aired providing useful, practical information for listeners who are also able to call in and have their questions answered live on air. A series of radio spots are also regularly produced.

The focus on radio as an effective medium in Haiti is reinforced by the evaluation findings. Radio is the second most popular source of information from the Red Cross, after community workers. Nearly a quarter of people interviewed (22%) report receiving information from the Red Cross through either the Radyo Kwa Wouj show or spots on other stations. The show format is also popular with listeners and has generated a loyal following. However the show is not well known and difficult to tune in Port au Prince, therefore new ways to publicise and diffuse the show should be investigated.

### **A personal response; enlisting a call centre**

Allowing beneficiaries to ask questions about the services the Red Cross provide is a critical function of the beneficiary communications programme in Haiti. In late 2010, an agreement was made with Noula, a Haitian call centre, to answer and log questions and complaints from residents of Annex de la Marie camp, who were being supported by the shelter department. The evaluation shows 85% of people interviewed are happy with the service provided by Noula and appreciate the chance to ask questions, which would support further use of the company. Generally people find it easy to call, but only use Noula if they think it will help or are interested in the services offered by the Red Cross.

### **Call freephone\*733 for more information**

A freephone recorded information line was set up just months after the earthquake and by the end of 2010 the \*733 had received 877,000 calls from Haitians keen for information on hygiene, cholera, hurricane preparedness, gender based violence and shelter. The best rates of use of the \*733 are obtained just after an SMS is sent to inform people of the service, therefore advertising is important.

### **Visibility; the power of posters and noticeboards?**

One of the most traditional methods of community engagement is posters and noticeboards. Within the Haiti operation notice boards and posters have been used to provide key information on programme implementation such as selection criteria, as well as on a large scale during the cholera epidemic. Only 5.5% of people reported receiving information from the Red Cross through posters, so they should only be used for specific purposes and should be supported with other media.

### **A traditional approach; community mobilisation and announcements**

People value face-to-face and oral communication most. A large majority of people (44%) received information from the Red Cross through community workers and 35% said it was their preferred source of information. However, this medium is costly and only reaches a small proportion of the population, so other tools should be used to support community work such as sound trucks and SMS.

### **Conclusion**

Providing evidence of the impact of beneficiary communications is incredibly difficult. Reports focus on the information disseminated and numbers of people reached but *what are people doing with the information* is often the missing link. This evaluation has gone some way to trying to answer this question and the results are impressive.

Nearly 70% of people interviewed changed something in their life as a result of Red Cross information. This percentage increases when looking specifically at the unique SMS system used by the Red Cross, where 95% found the information useful and 90% reported they changed something in their life or made some kind of preparation as a result of the information received. There is also a psychosocial benefit in sharing information with 12% saying receiving Red Cross information also made them feel better.

But there are context specific obstacles with the channels the Red Cross uses to share its information; a lack of electricity and low literacy rates. This, along with other key findings from the evaluation, demonstrates the need to create beneficiary campaigns which combine traditional methods with new technology. Decisions on the tools to use are not only context specific, the Red Cross must also recognise resource and budget limitations as also being defining factors.

As beneficiary communications develops two way communications tools, the ultimate goal will be integration with operational teams to ensure that the feedback of beneficiaries is taken on board and used to shape and refine programmes.



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**Beneficiary Communication**

## Introduction, context and objectives of the review

*“Communication services save lives alongside the distribution of relief items. Without information, people situated in camps lose perspective, lose hope, become frustrated and even angry. By channelling critical data about their situation and needs to aid agencies, affected populations increase the speed, relevance and effectiveness of aid and recovery efforts.”*

### **IFRC Briefing Note on Beneficiary communication – January 2011**

Communicating with beneficiaries is critical to the success of humanitarian programmes. It allows an organisation to engage with its main partner, the affected population, without which it can't develop appropriate activities or ensure the quality of aid delivery.

Providing information and communication can directly improve people's quality of life and even save lives. It is an aid item just as important as goods, and this is explicitly shown by programmes such as disaster preparedness, hygiene promotion or psycho-social support.

Sharing information with beneficiaries is also about dignity, as well as accountability. It recognises affected populations as deserving of information and respect and provides people with the information they need in order to make their own decisions.

However, beneficiary communications is not a new concept and programme managers engaged in this activity long before the term was established. Communication with beneficiaries is embedded in a range of humanitarian approaches, including participatory planning, improved practices promotion, community mobilisation, community meetings or even just informal chats during field visits. It is a key tool within development programmes for influencing behaviour change and although less established in humanitarian aid delivery, is equally as important.

Over the past 10 years though, the practice of beneficiary communications has evolved dramatically under the influence of two key factors: the growing importance of the principle of accountability to beneficiaries in humanitarian aid delivery and advances in technology, which mean information can travel much more widely and faster than ever before. Today programme managers need additional support to meet these challenges, which are increasing their workload and require the right skills and technical knowledge to develop messages and maximise the opportunity of new tools.

On the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2010 a violent earthquake shook Haiti, causing one of the most deadly and destructive disasters in the past three decades. The Haiti Operation has represented a new evolution in beneficiary communications, not only for the Red Cross Movement but for many organisations. For the first time, humanitarian aid agencies engaged in communication with the affected population right after the disaster, at scale, utilising the potential of new communication technologies.

From the very beginning of the operation, the Red Cross integrated beneficiary communication activities into its Plan of Action and within individual programmes. Communicating with beneficiaries and the affected population requires specialist communication skills and the Haiti operation has benefitted from the expertise of dedicated international and national staff, who have been doing tremendous work to very quickly set up several activities (FM radio show, radio spots, posters, SMS, call centre, notice boards etc).

The beneficiary communications team in Haiti organises its work around campaigns. For example, disaster preparedness, gender-based violence, cholera and health, disseminating key messages through multiple channels. The team also provides support to each programme and so is dependant on their engagement and commitment to both integrate beneficiary communication into their activities and to accept new tools brought by technological innovations.

The beneficiary communications activities and team of the IFRC in Haiti have been very innovative in developing partnerships with the private sector, including with:

- Trilogy International Partners, the parent company of Voila, the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest mobile network in the country, representing one third of the national market have provided SMS and a Red Cross toll-free recorded information line \*733
- Noula, a call centre and crisis mapping charity, overseen by Haitian software company Solutions manage a questions and complaints line for Red Cross
- Digicel, the largest mobile network provide a free 4636 SMS subscription service to Red Cross
- An interactive voice response (IVR) project will soon be launched with Trilogy International Partners and Digicel.

The primary objective of this evaluation is to assess the impact of beneficiary communications activities, campaigns and messages in Haiti, whilst gaining a better understanding of peoples' information needs and the most effective channels to use. The evaluation also aims to identify ways for the Red Cross to increase two-way communication to increase accountability and engagement with beneficiaries. The Terms of Reference are available in Annex 1.

This evaluation focuses on the beneficiary communications activities of the Haitian Red Cross (HRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), looking specifically at activities through the eyes of the beneficiaries to gauge perceptions and impact of the Red Cross.

**The report aims at answering the following key questions:**

1. How are people using Red Cross information? Are they using it in the way intended by the Red Cross e.g. as tips and advice to protect themselves?
2. How useful is the information provided by the Red Cross? What information is Red Cross not providing that they should?
3. How appropriate are the tools used by the Red Cross (SMS, \*733 phone line, Noura, notice boards, radio, sound trucks)? What channels are the Red Cross not using to communicate that they should be using?
4. Are people engaging in two-way communication with the Red Cross? Who is participating and why? What are the barriers and enablers to two-way communication?
5. What is the most common way people respond to communications from the Red Cross? What other tools/channels would make it easier for people to engage? What is the role of technology such as SMS or touch-tone automated phone surveys in increasing levels of two-way communication?

**The key findings of this review will:**

- Use knowledge gained on Haitian communication patterns and key media to improve the efficiency and impact of Red Cross beneficiary communication activities
- Identify key successes and best practices from the beneficiary communications activities conducted since early 2010
- Understand how Red Cross information is used and perceived by beneficiaries to inform future activities
- Confirm beneficiaries' information needs and identify gaps in information provision
- Provide insight into how and why people communicate with the Red Cross and how this could be increased.

Beneficiary communications is a new area so there is no set methodology for evaluation. The methodology was designed to allow the evaluation to answer the key questions in a cost effective way, and to complement other research already conducted in Haiti.

## Methodology

This evaluation aims to understand the perceptions, points of view and practices of the targeted audience: the Red Cross programme beneficiaries. Therefore answers to the key questions have been sought from the beneficiaries themselves and from informants who have knowledge of beneficiary behaviours and communication practices.

The details of the methodology can be found in Annex 2.

The results of the evaluation are based on a review of key IFRC beneficiary communications programme data, 626 individual interviews, 19 focus group discussions, interviews with key informants and observation. Ten sites were visited, mostly in Port-au-Prince, including camp and community populations.

A team of 12 interviewers were trained to conduct data collection and analysis, facilitation of discussions and site observations. This team was trained and supervised by the Team Leader and the field data collection was conducted over 10 days.

This evaluation is not a Knowledge Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey, which evaluates the impact of the messages on behaviour changes. Nor does it evaluate the efficiency of community mobilisation tools, although it does identify when this tool is appropriate, according to beneficiary perceptions. Additionally the review did not look at organisational issues and relations between programmes, beneficiary communications and beneficiaries, which are covered in the InfoAsAid research conducted in April and May 2011 in Haiti.

Generally people were willing to speak with the research team and were open to answering questions. Nevertheless, it was difficult to engage in completely open discussions with the population, while they are ongoing aid recipients of the Red Cross.

This evaluation presents a picture of the current situation, valid at this time. There is no baseline to allow comparison with a previous time period.

The methodology was designed to allow crosschecking and to reduce subjectivity. However as the point of the evaluation was to get Haitians' perceptions of IFRC/HRC communication activities, subjectivity cannot be completely eradicated. How people perceive the information provided by the Red Cross and how they communicate with the Red Cross, is however perfectly valid and particularly useful for programmes.



# Beneficiary Communication

## Overview of the existing knowledge on media and communication patterns in Haiti

"When we think of communication, we think of messaging and behaviour change. Haitians think of dialogue, debate and being able to find the information they need."

InfoAsAid Haiti Communication Research - 2011

### A. Preferred media

I learnt an essential word in Creole, which is also part of the Haitian way of life 'Ti parle': meaning discussion or chat. These two words describe well the importance in Haiti of engaging in dialogue and exchanging information from human to human, mostly face-to-face, in order to communicate.

**Key Findings:** Audio and visual media, such as radio and TV, are consistently people's favourite choice of media. Word of mouth - 'Radyo Bouche' - is a highly popular way to disseminate information. Displaced populations rely heavily on community workers for information from the Red Cross. Ownership of media equipment, such as televisions and radios, is lower than before the earthquake and consistently lower within camp populations compared to communities. SMS is an increasingly popular tool for disseminating public information.

**Key recommendations:** Selecting the right entry point to deliver information is essential to ensure wide and accurate diffusion. For example in a cohesive community, people will share information with neighbours. Word of mouth and radio are the preferred media for the general population. Sharing information by mobile phones is rapidly increasing, so it is important the Red Cross branding the information it sends out so it can be recognised easily.

Table 1: The media preferences expressed in surveys and research

Cholera research Internews January 2011	Audience Survey # 23 Internews April 2011	Beneficiary communications Review IFRC June 2011	
		<i>Displaced camps</i>	<i>Neighbourhood</i>
Radio	Word of Mouth	Community workers	Radio
TV	Radio	Word of Mouth	TV
Family and friends	Police	Radio	Mobile phone

It is important to note here that the beneficiary communications evaluation was conducted mostly in Port au Prince. In the displaced camps, the ownership of media equipment is slightly lower than in the rest of the population, and access to power is a huge constraint. On the other hand, the presence of community workers is more likely in camps.



The people we met definitely gave priority to audio and visual tools. Audio and oral communication is preferred, whatever the person's level of literacy. The preferred source for Red Cross information is community workers, at 35.5% of respondents, followed by the phone (9.3%) and the radio (5%).

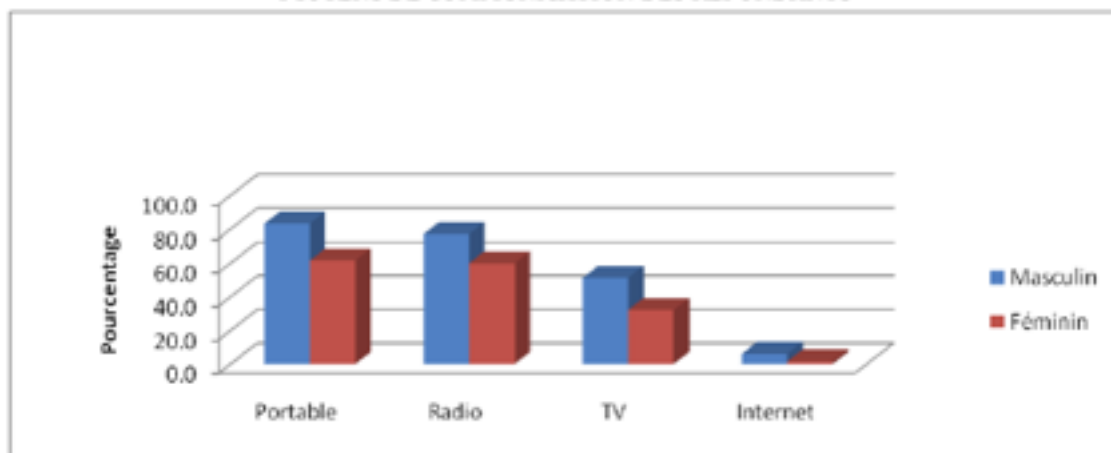
Word of mouth, Radyo Bouche, is a very popular method for sharing information received through the media. The efficiency of this method depends on the level of social cohesion within each location. The more connected a community, the more likely they are to share information. It is then particularly important for the Red Cross to identify the right entry point to each community and to understand how information is diffused.

Trust in both the information itself and the provider of the information is a critical factor for how likely it is the information will be passed from one person to another. The decision to pass information on, or not to share it at all, depends entirely on the recipient's perception of how relevant the information is. According to the Internews Audience Survey # 23, radio is the most trusted media. Indeed during our own review, people reported cross checking information received by word of mouth, from friends, neighbours or relatives, with information from the radio, SMS or Twitmobil.

Media preference could be partly explained by the ownership of equipment.

The Internews Cholera Survey of February 2011 shows that the ownership of mobile phone and radio is higher than of TV, and that men are more likely to own any kind of media equipment than women.

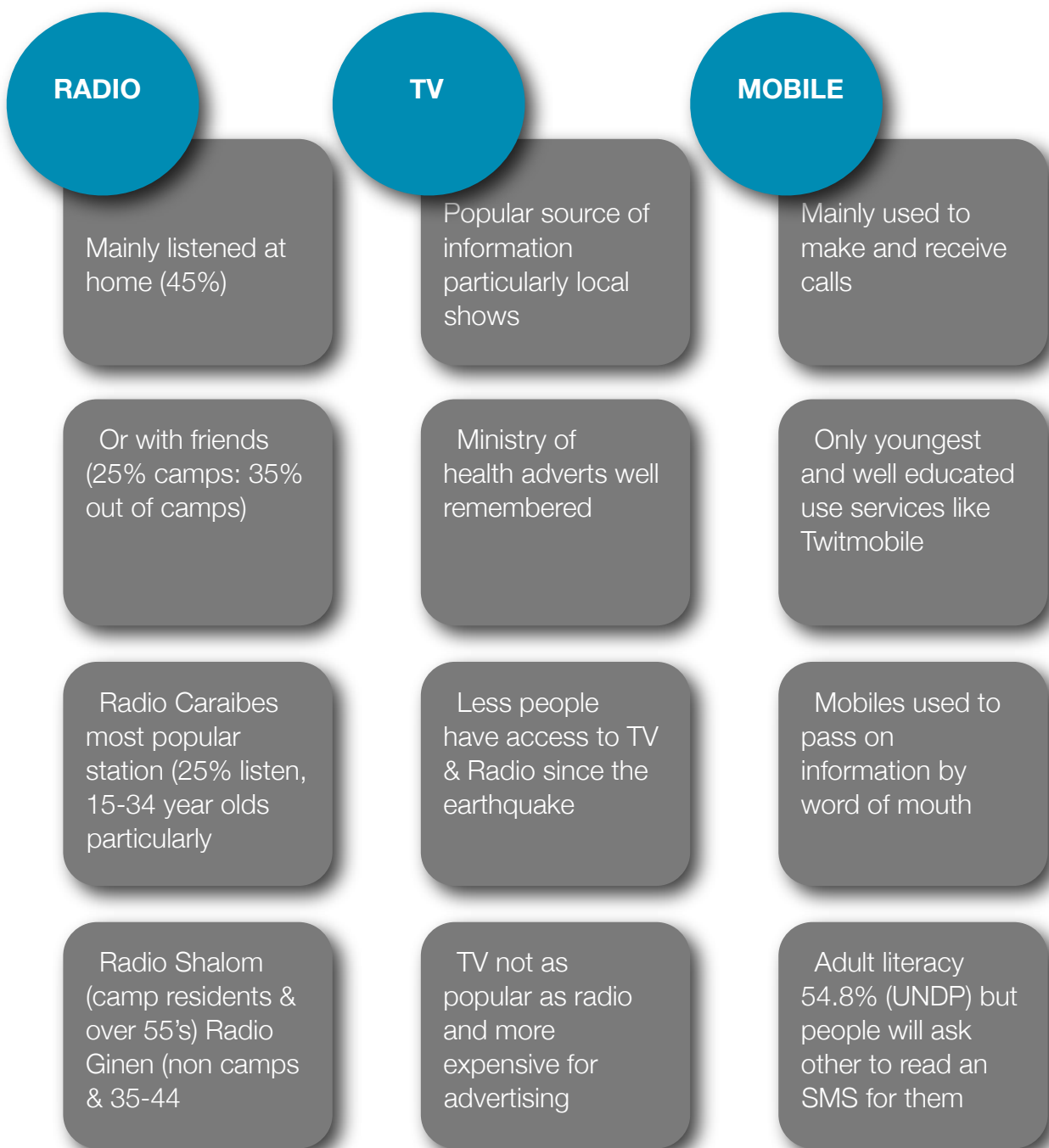
FIGURE 12  
MOYENS DE COMMUNICATION DES REpondANTS



Source: Cholera Survey – Internews – Feb 2011

Again the figures vary from one survey to another, but the trends remain the same. In this evaluation, 88% of the people interviewed owned a mobile phone, which corresponds to results from Internews. Ownership of a radio was only 56%, however the interviewees were mostly women, which could have affected the results. 36.7% of people interviewed reported having a TV and for both radio and TV, ownership levels were slightly lower in the camps.

## Media preference and patterns of media use



\* source: Internews Audience survey #18

This evaluation found similar preferences among the people interviewed. However, there could be regional differences which are not reflected in the Internews audience surveys, which are conducted only in Port-au-Prince, Petit-Goâve and Léogane. During the evaluation, we conducted a survey with the Red Cross Regional Committees and they mentioned other stations such as Delta in Bas Artibonite or RTN in the Nord Ouest.

### Box 1: Mobile phone service providers

There are 2 main mobile phone service providers in Haiti:  
Digicel: 60% of the market- 54.2 % of the persons interviewed  
Voila: 30% of the market-21.7% of the persons interviewed  
Both: 21.5% of the persons we interviewed

A proportion of the population uses both Digicel and Voila. Either at the same time if they have 2 phones or by switching SIM cards, in order to get better rates depending on their correspondent's service provider or the service they wish to use.

According to the recent InfoAsAid research (May 2011), SMS is a "widely trusted and actively sought after source of information". We discuss later how well Red Cross SMS are appreciated by recipients, however it is important to note here that SMS are not systematically opened or read by their recipients. SMS is becoming a very popular method to send messages for both public information and commercial purposes and people could feel overwhelmed by the number of messages to their phone, only opening them if the sender is clearly identified and trusted as an interesting and reliable source of information by the recipient. Branding of SMS is therefore particularly important.

Subscription to Twitmobil feeds is rapidly growing. There are various concurrent systems. The Digicel 4636 service offers the possibility to request information on a specific subject, while the 40404 is a subscription to a general feed, with people receiving up to 100 feeds per day. People in general apply scepticism to these messages.

### B. Communications patterns by gender, age and location

**Key Findings:** Women do not access as much information as men. Women are more selective. Women preferred direct contact with community workers and are the primary users of hotlines. The over 50s have the least access to information. The under 25s are the main users of new mobile solutions. Access to electricity is a key determinant in the choice of media. The level of social cohesion in a group influences how equipment and information is shared.

**Key Recommendations:** Different tools need to be used to reach different groups and sites. More effort needs to be made to communicate with the over 50's. Improving access to electricity is essential to ensure information reaches a wide audience.



**Beneficiary Communication**

## Media use will vary according to gender and age

Men rely more on media than women to get their information. In general, women do not access information as much as men. However, the preferred subjects, impact and how they use the information is similar in both groups.

**“We are not in charge of that (to collect information)”**

### Woman in Annexe de la Mairie

#### Men

- Will listen to almost anything on the radio for more hours and more frequently than women
- (In Camps) Get their information about the Red Cross from radio and SMS
- (In neighbourhoods) Get information about the Red Cross from radio and TV

#### Women

- More selective about what they listen to on the radio, preferring entertainment or religious shows, such as rigolotherapie, which is very popular amongst women living in camps
- (In camps) Get information about the Red Cross from community workers and SMS
- (In neighbourhoods) hear about the Red Cross mainly through Radio and SMS
- Are the main users of hotlines according to the InfoAsAid research

#### Under 25's

- Rely on mobile phone for information more than any other age group
- Use Twitmobil and SMS to get information on anything from politics to love messages
- Use the radio for entertainment, rather than to get information

#### Adults (25-30)

- More likely to participate in meetings, training opportunities and educational sessions

#### Over 50's

- Most deprived of information as they don't use mobile phones and participate less in social exchanges or events

## Media use will also vary according to location and especially with access to electricity

Cost and availability of electricity affects people's access to information, the kind of media they can use and for how many hours per day. The situation in displaced camps and in rural or urban areas with no regular power, differs greatly from those areas with a reliable source of electricity.

The individual interviews conducted during the evaluation revealed that there is a slight difference between the camps and neighbourhoods when it comes to possession of equipment:

- The ownership of radio varies between 41.9 and 65% in camps and 49 and 72.2% outside of camps
- The ownership of TV varies between 25.8 and 43.9% in camps and 30.6 and 64.4% outside the camps

These variations could be due to access to electricity, but also to the impact of the earthquake. During the earthquake or because of the economic difficulties following the earthquake, many people lost their possessions, including their electronic equipment. The cost to recover lost equipment is definitely lower for mobile phones and radio than for television. The cost to charge a mobile phone is also much lower (10-15 Gourdes or 25-37cents for a full charge) than for radio or TV.

However the availability of electricity is as much a constraint as the cost of electricity. People living in camps are often more deprived of access to power sources than people living in neighbourhoods. However some camp residents report watching TV, thanks to the electricity being 'free' in some camps.

Where there is more social cohesion in an area, media equipment and information will be shared more widely and word of mouth will also be more effective. In some areas, people report not speaking with their neighbours at all.

**"I not speaking with anybody, I am staying on my own, I do not trust anybody here"**

**Woman in Mais Gaté 2**

While in other places such as the neighbourhood of Cité Militaire, where social cohesion is high, neighbours forward SMS to their contacts, they share information they find useful with each other and they increase the volume of the radio or TV when the news is on.

Radio and TV are usually consumed in a group at home, rather than at work. Most of the information is discussed on the spot and then, if found useful, shared with others.

#### **A note on literacy level**

This evaluation did not identify strong differences among groups depending on their level of literacy. However, it does not mean they do not exist. Literacy level definitely influences the use of certain media, such as sending SMS (and in a lesser extend receiving them) and Twitmobil. It was observed during field work that people reported not receiving SMS from Kwa Wouj on their Voila phone but in fact they had received them, but just didn't open them as they could not read them.

However, literacy does not seem to influence the use of other media such as call centres or posters. People calling the radio show Radyo Kwa Wouj for example, come from all kinds of groups, and not necessarily educated people.

### C. Preferred subjects and information needs

**Key Findings:** Practical information on health and weather hazards is most valued and most likely to be shared with others. Red Cross SMS recipients particularly appreciate weather warnings. The media does not provide people with all the information they need. People want more detailed information on Red Cross activities.

**Key Recommendations:** Focus on practical health and weather information and on gaps, not filled by the media or other organisations. Information and communication are essential to build trust with the people the Red Cross is working with. Provide more information on Red Cross programmes.

One constant in all the interviews and discussions we conducted is that people are interested in practical information, mostly related to their health and to weather hazards.

The top concern of people at the time of the field work was cholera. Health in general is a key priority for people. The cost of health services in Haiti is high and people value prevention over treatment. Health is a daily concern for mothers caring for several children and elderly family members. People often feel they do not have access to sufficient information through the existing media. Cholera represents the main subject of the questions raised during the Radyo Kwa Wouj show. One third of the radio show listeners interviewed, reported cholera and health as their key concern. The same proportion was seen in the individual interviews. Reproductive and sexual health is also often mentioned as an information need.

Information about weather hazards came out as the second most popular type of information people look for. They feel they lack timely information on weather conditions which would allow them to get ready. The Red Cross SMS recipients particularly appreciate this kind of information as they are timely and allow them to prepare for a potential disaster.

Generally people do not perceive themselves as deprived of information. However they give a huge importance to communication and information sharing and see it as a mark of respect and commitment, necessary to build trust and beneficial to social relations. Engaging in more in-depth discussions, people expressed very specific gaps in information:

- Clear information on the Red Cross activities and support provided: particularly targeting, closure, and outputs
- Information they are not able to access through other sources: such as basic health prevention, weather hazards and preparedness, assistance they can access.

## The use and perception of the Red Cross Beneficiary communications activities and tools

**74% of the people interviewed reported receiving information from the Red Cross. 96% said it was useful information. 83% reported taking action after receiving the information. 73% shared the information with others. 10% have communicated back with the Red Cross.**

The proportion of people reporting to have received information from the Red Cross is over 90% in the sites where the Red Cross is or was implementing activities. But even in the sites where the Red Cross is not implementing activities, a minimum of 55% of the people interviewed declared having received information from the Red Cross (mostly through mobile phone).

The main sources of information from the Red Cross are community workers (44%), the radio (35%), mobile phone (26%) and TV (14%)<sup>2</sup>. The proportion of people receiving information from the Red Cross through the radio in sites where Red Cross is not directly implementing activities is much higher and varies from 28 to 60%. It shows the importance of radio as a medium, when direct communication is not possible.

The main campaigns people remember are cholera (68% of the respondents who recorded receiving Red Cross information) and weather /disaster preparedness (45%). It is not unusual that people did not mention the gender-based violence campaign, which is a very sensitive subject and needs anonymity; It is important however to mention that the recorded information line received tens of thousands of calls during a GBV campaign. The cholera and the disaster preparedness campaigns are also the most recently implemented at the time of the research.

The level of satisfaction with the information provided is very high in all the sites: 96%. It shows once more that information is always valued by people, even if it is “negative” information, such as the closure of a programme or advice which is difficult to put into practice due to lack of resources or other constraints.

People receiving information are also generally doing something with it. 67% of them reported changing “something” in their life as a result of Red Cross information. This proportion is slightly higher in the sites where the Red Cross hygiene promoters are working, but it is not significant enough to draw conclusions on the impact of community mobilisation programmes.

**“We apply all the advices, because it is not for the Red Cross, but for our own good”**

**Woman – Mais Gaté 2**

17% of the people use Red Cross information to get better prepared. And 12% report feeling better thanks to the information.

**“We feel that Red Cross cares for us”**

**Young Women - Caradeux**





**Beneficiary Communication**

41% of the people interviewed report that they share information with others and 32% said that they discussed the information with others. It demonstrates first that people value the information and think it is worth sharing and secondly, that word of mouth is very important as a medium.

The proportion of people sharing information received by the Red Cross with others varies widely from one site to another. It reflects the various levels of social communication and cohesion that the research team observed in the selected sites as mentioned previously.

The evaluation highlights another important issue that the IFRC Beneficiary communications team is trying to tackle: the lack of two way communication. Tools have been put in place for people to contact the Red Cross (the call centre, the call-in radio) and actively look for the information they need (\*733, the toll free recorded information line). But only 10% of the people interviewed had contacted the Red Cross. 85% of these said they had used the call centre service and 5% used the ambulance service. 70% of them are living in Annexe de la Mairie and, as we will see later, called mostly to request a shelter.

We will see now with more details how each tool is used and perceived by the targeted audience.

## A. Community mobilisation and announcements

**Key Findings:** People value face-to-face and oral communication most and appreciate engaging in a two-way 'chat' or ti parle with Red Cross representatives.

**Key Recommendations:** Evaluate the work of community workers. Engage in informal conversation as much as formal ones to build trust and develop two-way communication. Continue to support the sound truck system.

It is no surprise people value face-to-face communication most and prefer to receive information through community workers. However, this medium is costly and can only reach a small proportion of the population. Additionally, some sensitive topics are best not discussed face-to-face.

Some sites feel they do not receive the same level of service from the Red Cross if there are no community workers in that area. As mentioned, a large majority of people received information from the Red Cross through community workers (44%). A large proportion of people also declared that it is their preferred source of information (35%).

Community workers are not only disseminating information related to on-going campaigns. They also pass on other information and ensure the visibility of the Red Cross to its beneficiaries. 85% of the people who used the Noula call centre heard about this service through community workers or relatives, only 2 people reported finding out about it through posters.

People also value the informality of a discussion and being able to chat (Ti Parle) with their interlocutors, rather than feeling their interlocutors are ticking boxes on a questionnaire. The evaluation team was asked specifically to use a conversational and informal tone while conducting interviews. Many people we met in the camps and neighbourhoods said they appreciated the way they were treated and the time allowed for conversation and opportunity to express themselves freely, openly and “out of the box”. People in the camps especially reported they are not given sufficient opportunities to express their concerns and to engage in a real interactive discussion with the Red Cross.

Sound trucks (vehicles with speakers that can play recorded information) were used during the cholera communication campaigns between November 2010 and January 2011 and more recently in May and June 2011. However nobody reported receiving information this way. This could be because the sound trucks and the messages disseminated were not clearly associated directly with the Red Cross. Sound trucks are a valued media, especially to relay information quickly to a large population. They are used often in and outside of Port au Prince for campaigns and also for advertisements (we observed the use of sound trucks everyday while collecting the information on the field). Committees or representatives in camps often use them to relay information on weather hazards or distributions for example. Community mobilisation professionals reported that messages associated with music attract more attention. The Red Cross is currently investing in its own sound truck

#### **B. Radyo Kwa Wouj show and the radio spots:**

**Key Findings:** Radio is a very popular medium. The Radyo Kwa Wouj show attracts peoples' attention by its well designed format. However the show is not well known.

**Key Recommendations:** Invest in radio as a media. Advertise the Radyo Kwa Wouj show and look for cost effective ways to increase its diffusion. Explain the call-in function of the radio show better, while on air.

As mentioned earlier, radio is the most popular source of information in Haiti. Radio spots and radio shows are therefore a very efficient way to communicate with the population in Haiti.

We evaluated the use and perception of Red Cross radio communications through individual interviews, interviews with Radyo Kwa Wouj listeners, a short survey with the Red Cross Regional committees and participant observation.

We received feedback on radio spots about cholera through the focus group discussions; however it is very difficult to say if this feedback applies specifically to the Red Cross spots. Generally people appreciate radio spots, especially if they complement community mobilisation work such as hygiene promotion or as a reminder of key messages. Spots that use music and humour are especially liked

There are no audience figures available in Haiti for different radio stations and so we cannot say how many people listen to Radio 1, the station through which the weekly Radyo Kwa Wouj is broadcast.

One of the indicators for the growing success of Radyo Kwa Wouj is the increasing number of calls. From only a few in 2010; the show is now answering between 10 and 20 calls to each show. More calls could be answered if more time was available.

The format of the show is attractive to its audience. At one-hour, the show is longer than many other Haitian shows and the attention of listeners could fall after 20-30 minutes. However the format of the show tackles this by using spots with music and humour at strategic points. It uses a chat show format and opens to questions during the second half. During participant observation in the field, it was noticed some people did not realise they could phone in and ask questions and didn't clearly understand the phone numbers or their function. One of the reasons could be a decrease in attention by this time in the show, or the higher-class style of Creole vocabulary used by the presenters.

A total of 29 phone numbers were recorded during the shows of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2011. Among these 29 listeners, the research team succeeded in interviewing 21.

Only 10% of the listeners interviewed were from the region of Port au Prince, and none came from the centre of Port au Prince. The listeners were mostly from Leogane (40%) and Grand Goave (30%). The geographical origins of listeners could vary from one show to the other due to technical constraints. For example, power shortages could cut a whole region from receiving radio signals. Radio 1 is also not available some regions. In Port au Prince, very few people seem to be listening to this station. Reasons for this could include the multitude of available stations in the city and the fact that Radio 1 is difficult to tune using a manual tuner in Port au Prince. A survey of Red Cross regional committees revealed that Radio 1 broadcasts in 6 out of the 12 regions in Haiti.

12 out of the 21 auditors interviewed are women. They came from various professional backgrounds and levels of education. The radio team also observed that listeners calls over the year are from a mixed background. However 63% of the listeners interviewed were between 20 and 35 years old; which indicates a young audience.

All the people interviewed are regular listeners to Radyo Kwa Wouj and they particularly like the show. They find the show provides them with practical and useful information they can put into practice in their daily life and share with others. As well, 3 auditors reported calling on behalf of others. The women during participant observation of the radio show were not regular listeners of Radyo Kwa Wouj, but they found the information provided very practical and useful.

**“Now we know more and we know how to deal with a pregnant woman fainting”**

**Women after listening to Radyo Kwa Wouj on First Aid – La Piste – Port au Prince**

The listeners interviewed and people met during the group discussions generally listen to the radio at home with others. Half of them are used to calling radio shows or call centres to obtain more information. The opportunity to call during the show increases their interest in the show<sup>2</sup>.

Radyo Kwa Wouj is equally appreciated by its regular listeners as by a new audience, as the participant observation showed. The subjects covered correspond to the information needs expressed by the population (see section 1). The format also corresponds to what people generally look for in information and media: practical information, a bit of music and humour.

However the show is not very well known. 22% of the people interviewed report receiving information from the Red Cross through radio. However, this is not all through Radyo Kwa Wouj, but also through radio spots on other channels. Radio 1 is not one of the most popular radio stations, especially in Port au Prince. However, the cost of broadcasting in Port au Prince is very high, especially on a well known station such as Radio Caraibes. The cost of broadcasting on regional stations is more reasonable and could be a better option for reaching a larger audience.

Advertising Radyo Kwa Wouj is essential and other tools could be used to do this, such as community workers and regional branches. Only half of the regional committees in the areas where Radio 1 is broadcasting reported organising advertising for Radyo Kwa Wouj.

### C. Red Cross SMS

**Key Findings:** 25% of people recall receiving an SMS from the Red Cross. This includes Digicel customers, which indicates SMS are shared and passed on. Weather and health SMS are most appreciated - 95% found them useful and 90% reported they changed something in their life following an SMS. SMS are also well-remembered and cost-effective..

**Key Recommendations:** ISMS should be well branded as the flux of SMS is increasing. Messages should remain practical and focus on key topics wanted by the population, such as weather alerts and health. SMS should be used to back up door-to-door campaigns.

Since March 2010, the IFRC has been supported by Trilogy International Partners, parent company of Voila - Haiti's 2<sup>nd</sup> largest mobile network, to send SMS for free to millions of mobile users as part of specific communication campaigns.



**Beneficiary Communication**

During the cholera epidemic from the 21<sup>st</sup> of October 2010 to date (June 2011), 15 million SMS have been delivered, providing basic but key messages in Creole, in accordance with MSPP (Ministry of Public Health) guidelines. Here are 2 examples of SMS sent:

Red Cross: To prevent cholera, only use treated water particularly if it's for drinking, boil it or put 5 drops of chlorine in a gallon or use aquatab. Let water rest for 30 minutes before you drink it.

Red Cross: Drink ORS to treat diarrhoea. 1 litre of treated water, 4 spoons of sugar, 1/2 teaspoon of salt. If it gets worse, go to a doctor for help

People recalling SMS on cholera said they found them really useful. They trusted the information provided as it echoed messages disseminated through other media: for example hygiene promoters, radio and TV spots, posters etc. Even if most of the people interviewed declared that they already knew the information or did what the SMS told them, they still valued receiving them. They understood that SMS are received by everybody in their community, and that they could influence others. They also valued SMS as a reminder of a particular point they could have forgotten, such as ORS formula, chlorination dose or the cholera emergency number.

In total, 25% of the people interviewed reported receiving information from the Red Cross through their phone. Only half of these people own a Voila phone, meaning the other half are presumably receiving messages shared by family or friends. Within the people who owned a Voila phone, 26% reported receiving information from the Red Cross through their mobile. Therefore service provider does not have an impact on reception rate, indicating messages are shared with others and forwarded on<sup>2</sup>.

All the people who received information through their phone recalled it was about cholera and/or disaster preparedness. 95% found it useful and 90% reported they changed something in their life or made some kind of preparation as a result of the information received from the Red Cross.

The InfoAsAid research found that 100% of group discussion participants recalled receiving SMS on cholera and hurricane warnings, but these group discussion participants were mostly community leaders with a role in passing on information.

25% recall of a message sent through a mass media is already a very good result. Many factors can explain a rate below 100%: low literacy, people do not recall the message as a Red Cross message, some people did not receive the messages because their phone was switched off or they were using another SIM when the message was sent or they were not interested in the subject and so don't recall the message.

SMS related to health prevention and weather hazards are most appreciated. Weather alerts via SMS are particularly well received as it seems they are the only source of information on this topic.

The understanding of messages is very high and people can easily remember the content of an SMS even after several weeks. SMS is also viewed as a very good complement to door-to-door activities as it reminds people of key messages and keeps them alive longer - often door-to-door campaigns are short because they are resource intensive.

SMS is also a very cost efficient tool as the same cost applies no matter how many SMS are sent.

**"I am not living near a river, my house is always tidy and clean, I am not concerned by floods, but I found the Red Cross messages really useful, like for example reminding me to think of stocking batteries and flashlights before a storm".**

**Woman in St Marc, Bas Artibonite**

#### **D.The toll free recorded information line - \*733**

**Key Findings:** The recorded information line has proven to be very popular when promoted in campaigns. Its rate of use is low outside the periods of advertisement. It is useful for sharing sensitive information, that people are uncomfortable discussing face-to-face.

**Key Recommendations:** Advertising the service more widely and systematically.

Among the individuals interviewed only one person reported to have ever used the current recorded information service \*733. This person was not living in an area where the Red Cross has an important presence (Cité Militaire) and reported hearing about the service through the radio. Generally the team, through the individual interviews and the group discussion, found that the population were not aware of this service.

One of the key advantages of this service is that it is completely anonymous. It allows people to access information, sometimes sensitive information, without being in contact with another person. On the other hand it is not possible to conduct an evaluation of the use, perception and the level of satisfaction of the users.

The evaluation indicates this service could be very much appreciated, but that it needs to be advertised for people to use it. Indeed, the best rates of use of the \*733 are obtained just after a SMS is sent to inform people of the service. Early 2011, during a campaign against Gender Based Violence, the number of users jumped. Recently at the end of June 2011, during the disaster preparedness campaign, the number of users jumped again from 1901 during week 24 to 56520 during the week 25<sup>2</sup>, following an SMS to advertise the service.



### Box 3. Example of advertising message

“Red Cross: It’s better to be prepared. Please call \*733 for more information on how you and your family can prepare for emergencies”

The number of calls dropped down to 14075 the following week. This demonstrates that the service needs to be continually advertised until the number becomes well known. This service will be replaced in November 2011 by an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) phone line, which will allow people to access recorded information as well as take part in surveys by pressing buttons on their phone to indicate their choices. This provides the possibility to use the telephone line to establish two-way communication with beneficiaries, whatever their level of literacy is. Advertisements will still be needed to promote this new service.

### E. The call centre – Complaints and responses

**Key Findings:** The NouLa call centre is well advertised and people find it easy to use and are largely satisfied with the service. People only use the service if they think it will help them or they are interested in the options offered by the Red Cross. People appreciate receiving information, even if it's bad news like the stopping of a service – 'they just want to know'.

**Key Recommendations:** Noula is well appreciated so expand this service to cover more programmes and areas. Use general information collected by Noula to give an overview of the key priorities of the wider population. Inform the population whenever services are stopping.

The call centre service (free number 177) is managed by Noula, a filial of the Haitian corporate firm Solutions. Noula is contracted by the Red Cross to offer a questions and complaints service to its beneficiaries. They also provide services to IOM and welcome general calls from the public, from as early as February 2010.

A previous evaluation of the satisfaction of call centre users showed 85% were satisfied with Noula and 46% were satisfied with the Red Cross. The main reason for dissatisfaction with the Red Cross was not having received a shelter yet. The majority of the callers were indeed requesting a shelter.

The present review team interviewed 40 persons, all living in Annexe de la Mairie, who used the call centre between the 21<sup>st</sup> and the 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2011. These people were selected randomly from the list of users made available by Noula to the Red Cross. As many men as women were interviewed, mostly between 20 and 50 years old. 85% of them heard about this service through the community workers or relatives, only 2 of them found about the service through posters. More than half of them call regularly and all are willing to continue to use the service. Again 85% of the people interviewed are happy with the service provided by Noula.

Generally, 10% of the people interviewed during this evaluation have contacted the Red Cross. Of those, 85% did so through the Noula call centre, the majority of whom live in Annexe de la Mairie.

The call centre is currently the main tool the Red Cross uses to establish two-way communication with its beneficiaries.

**Box 4: Why do people try to establish communication with the Red Cross**

Personal interest, credibility of the interlocutor, and knowledge of the available channels are the key factors that trigger people to communicate with the Red Cross, using the various methods open to them: volunteers and workers, call centre, calls to the radio show etc

Looking at the Noula call centre experience, the general number of calls increases when the population is feeling a new stress: heavy rain, hurricane season, new cases of cholera, and increase in expenses (end of the year or beginning of the school year).

The population living in the camp of Caradeux know well the existence of the call centre service, but are not using it as they are not interested in the alternative shelter options proposed by the Red Cross. On the other hand, the inhabitants of Annexe de La Mairie are using the service, have benefited from Red Cross support on many occasions and are generally attracted by the services offered.

Most of the population in Annexe de la Mairie know about the call centre service and they use it. They are also often in contact with Red Cross community workers in the camp. However people said some problems are not reported because they do not trust the community workers to report the information back to the Red Cross. Residents reported feeling the community workers are not interested because they do not engage in Ti Parle or that they do not spend time contacting the Red Cross because they don't think Red Cross will do anything for them.

However, most people are simply not establishing communication with the Red Cross because they do not know how, but people are generally happy to use a service when they discover its existence.

Noula receives between 50 and 100 calls per week directly related to the Red Cross shelter and water and sanitation programmes. The majority of the callers are women.

The only calls recorded and passed on to the Red Cross are about the shelter or the water and sanitation programme. However, many people heard about the call centre service through the Red Cross and are calling Noula for other information. These calls are not systematically passed to the Red Cross. They can however be consulted on the public section of the Noula website <http://www.noula.ht/> and could provide an indication of the preoccupations of the population. They will of course vary according to the on-going information campaigns.



**Beneficiary Communication**

Call centre staff report that generally callers are polite and well mannered, despite the fact they are phoning to ask for a shelter and are expressing strong needs. They felt that people were at ease to speak to them, which is confirmed by this evaluation: people feel it is easy to call Noula. Call centre staff report an increasing tension and stress from callers, as information spreads that construction has ended. Some callers are reporting that the selection criteria has not been communicated to them clearly enough. Some people call repeatedly, which could show their needs and interest in the programme, but also the ease they find in using this service.

The call centre services are well advertised (poster, community workers, committees, word of mouth) and people in the 2 camps targeted by the service know it well.

#### **Box 5: The call centre service for the Watsan programme**

Information about the stopping of free water trucking by the Red Cross has been well disseminated among the population through SMS, posters, notice boards, radio shows and community mobilisation. Most people reported they were pleased the Red Cross had informed them of the closure of the programme, but did not see the need for additional information on alternative water provision as they were already used to alternative water sources. By June 2011, less than 10 calls have been registered in the call centre regarding the water trucking programme closure.

On the other hand a lot of people who benefitted from hygiene kits distributions have been complaining about the lack of information regarding the continuation or stopping of distributions. They "just want to know".

#### **A. Posters and Notice Boards**

**Key findings:** Posters and notice boards are not used widely by the Red Cross. It is not a very popular tool with beneficiaries and can be subject to damage.

**Key recommendations:** Use this tool only when it is most appropriate – for example when providing specific programme information. Find additional ways to share information.

Only 6% of the people who reported receiving information from the Red Cross mentioned posters as the source of that information. This tool has not been used widely by beneficiary communications, except for the cholera campaigns, shelter solutions campaign and ending of water trucking.

The evaluation team observed that the posters and leaflets on cholera are well appreciated, people are happy to have them displayed on their shelter and they are well protected from degradation. On the other hand, the notice boards and posters related to Red Cross programmes tend to be more subject to degradation, either because of their value as shelter material or because of the message they carry. The French Red Cross has tried the use of large banners set up across the street and find these more effective than notice boards, which they observed were damaged rather quickly.

## Conclusion

Providing evidence of the impact of communication is always difficult. Reports focus on the information disseminated and numbers of people reached but what are people doing with the information is often the missing link. This evaluation goes some way to answering these questions, as well as providing general information on Haitian media preferences and patterns of use.

The beneficiary communications programme has been led by a team of communication experts, who support programme teams to ensure accountability to beneficiaries and to provide highly needed and sometimes life-saving information. The role of the beneficiary communications team has also been critical in establishing partnerships with private sector partners.

This evaluation highlights the successes of beneficiary communications activities, at work since January 2010, to:

- ✓ Establish a range of media tools enabling the Red Cross to reach a large section of the Haitian population
- ✓ Initiate two-way communication with beneficiaries through the call centre and radio call-ins
- ✓ Develop cost-effective tools: a rate of reception of 25% for SMS sent at no cost to the Red Cross and a reasonably priced call centre
- ✓ Continually evaluate its tools and seek to improve them: radio show, SMS; new IVR project
- ✓ Ensure a majority of the targeted audience are satisfied with the information provided.

This evaluation also sought to look more closely at the communication patterns of the Haitian population and to provide information for the beneficiary communications programme to continue to improve its communication tools and methods. It outlines specific obstacles, such as lack of electricity or low literacy rates, which highlight the need for beneficiary campaigns which combine traditional methods with new technology.

Throughout this evaluation, it is reaffirmed that beneficiary communications is essential to establish trust with people, especially in the recovery phase. The new tools developed by beneficiary communications, and their success so far, have an essential role to play in this process of building trust. However it is the responsibility of all teams and programmes to ensure that appropriate two-way communication is established. As we move forward, the integration of beneficiary communications into operations and the willingness of programmes to take on board the feedback of their beneficiaries use it to shape and refine their activities will be the ultimate goal.

Finally, this review has highlighted the role the Red Cross could continue to play in Haiti in the future in the key sectors of health prevention and disaster preparedness.

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### Short Glossary

This report contains several expressions in English, Creole or in French which could require some explanations...

Beneficiary communications (Eng.)	Beneficiary Communication
Kwa Wouj (Cr.)	Red Cross
Radyo Kwa Wouj (Cr.)	The weekly Red Cross radio show
Radyo Bouche (Cr. /Fr.)	Word of mouth, literally translated: radio mouth
Radyo 32 (Cr.)	Word of mouth, because the mouth is carrying 32 teeth
Radyo Dyol (Cr.)	Word of mouth, literally translated: radio mouth
Ti Parle (Cr.)	A chat, an informal short discussion

# The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

**Humanity** The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

**Impartiality** It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

**Neutrality** In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

**Independence** The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

**Voluntary service** It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

**Unity** There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

**Universality** The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

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