

# Awareness, Communication, and Outreach for Social Protection Schemes during COVID-19

August, 2020



# The Awareness, Communication and Outreach Working Group

The report was developed as part of the COVID-19 Global Situation Room, convened by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, with contributions from the following members of the Awareness, Communication and Outreach Working Group:

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- Table of contents

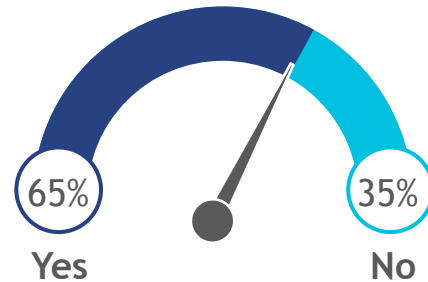


For details of these issues as well as an array of case studies - please see the full pitchbook deck that accompanies this presentation

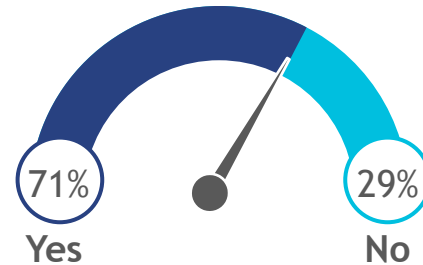
# Poor communication reduces the impact of cash transfer programs

Beneficiaries in India had stronger levels of awareness around safety and precautions for COVID-19 than that of social protection programs

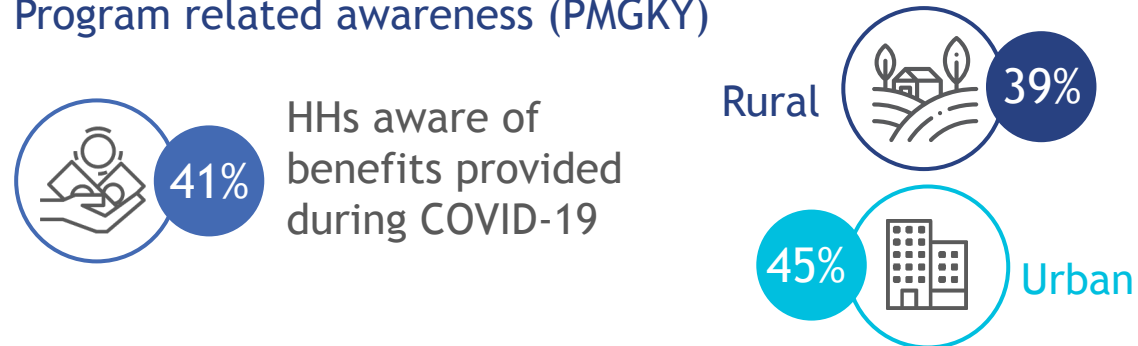
Did someone from govt. contact you to explain symptoms of and precautions to COVID-19?



Did someone from govt. contact you to explain government benefits ?

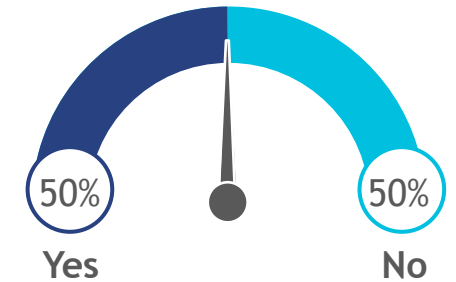


## Program related awareness (PMGKY)

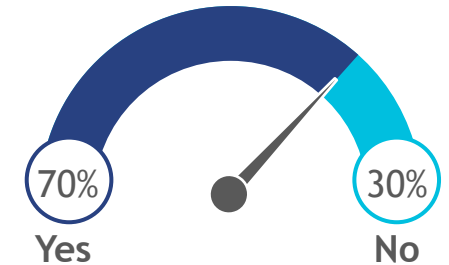


Government of Indonesia needs to strengthen communication around social protection programs as current awareness levels are low

Do you have detailed information about eligibility, and entitlement for PKH?



Do you have detailed information about eligibility, and entitlement for BPNT?



## Grievances around social protection programs








The Indonesian Ombudsman has opened special complaints regarding issues during COVID. Majority of complaints received are regarding social assistance



Data source: MSC's survey on response to COVID-19  
Quantitative surveys (demand side): 5082, Qualitative surveys (demand side): 449; Qualitative survey (supply side): 96

<https://www.microsave.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Coping-with-COVID-19.pdf>

# An effective communications strategy for G2P payments and direct benefit transfers requires a complex range of considerations and components for different stakeholders

Demand-side (G2P beneficiaries)	Supply-side (Front-line workers)
 <p><b>Program awareness</b> (eligibility and entitlement) and guidelines to be followed (social distancing, health and safety etc.)</p>	<p><b>Program awareness</b> (adjustments over time -operational, technical, etc.) and <b>guidelines to be followed</b> (exception management, safety, etc.)</p>
 <p><b>Benefit withdrawal process</b> (when and where to collect the benefits, documents required etc.)</p>	<p><b>Compensation for front-line workers</b> (extra commissions, health and safety costs to be covered, etc.)</p>
 <p><b>Communication channels</b> (considering different programs, geographies, culture, capabilities and practices)</p>	<p><b>Channels used to spread awareness</b> (leveraging above the line media, and digital mass communication with local P2P communication)</p>
 <p><b>Frequency of communication</b> (one time, recurring considering the program objectives and target population)</p>	<p><b>Frequency of communication</b> (formal v. informal, one-off v. continuous feedback)</p>
 <p><b>Managing fraud and grievance resolution</b> (how and where to complain/see redress)</p>	<p><b>Accountability</b>(tracking and rebutting rumors/incorrect information)</p>
 <p><b>Exception mechanisms for the vulnerable</b> (sick, old, single women, etc.)</p>	
 <p><b>Two-way communication and feedback mechanism</b> (to improve the program)</p>	<p><b>Query resolution</b> (contact details of relevant department officers for urgent help on scheme implementation)</p>

\*Please refer to the detailed pitch book for more insights \*Details vary country to country depending upon the nature of the program

An estimated 15% of the population are often invisible and excluded. They are likely to become even more vulnerable during emergencies. Build a focused strategy reflecting their special needs

## Identify the vulnerable

*(High risk groups during COVID-19)*

Depend on the informal economy

Have no or poor literacy levels

Limited capacities/opportunities to cope and adapt

Limited/  
no access to technology/internet

Inadequate access to social services

Live in rural/remote areas

## Understand the communication barriers

- Identity, culture, language, and norms
- Social, environment, economical, and geographical context
- Participation and community engagement
- Behavioral reasons, fear/hesitation
- Lack of access to media/digital channels
- Disability (Immobility and health issues)

## Overcome the barriers

01

Prepare a **focused** communication plan for the vulnerable targeting each of the identified barriers

02

**Recruit/train** multilingual staff. Involve them in message (action-oriented and inclusive) designing and dissemination

03

Provide information in **multiple and accessible** formats. Also, involve community leaders, front-line workers

04

Involve **women for community engagement**. Tailor activities as per gender and local culture(e.g. a weekly radio show, hosted by local women)

05

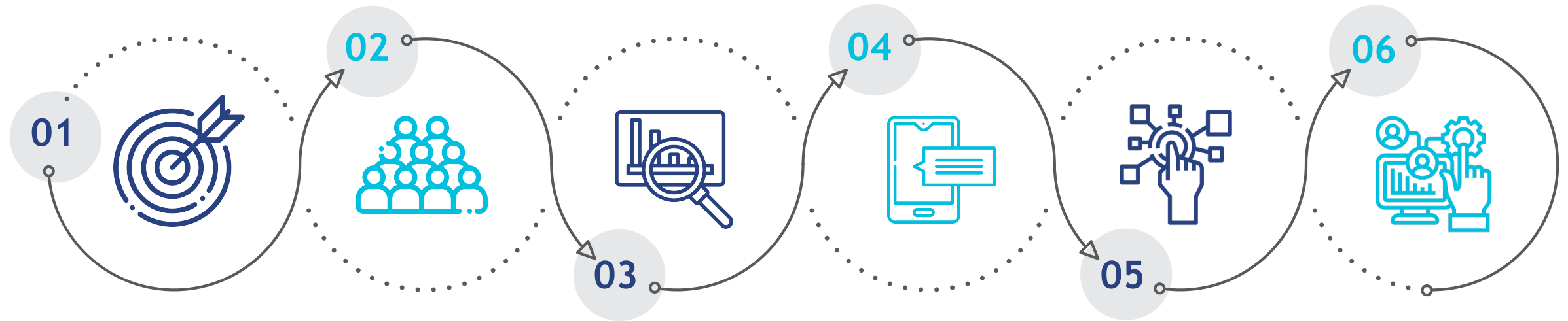
Active outreach to **collect feedback**. Ensure access to up to date information (**where & how to access cash transfers/ social benefits**) based on feedback.

[https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/COVID-19\\_CommunityEngagement\\_130320.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/COVID-19_CommunityEngagement_130320.pdf)

[https://www.unicef.org/disabilities/files/COVID-19\\_engagement\\_children\\_and\\_adults\\_with\\_disabilities\\_final.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/disabilities/files/COVID-19_engagement_children_and_adults_with_disabilities_final.pdf)

Well Made Strategy (WMS) provides a approach to develop impactful communications to influence policy change, respond to crisis, and improve participation in social schemes

## 6 step approach to strategic communication



**Objective**  
(What are you trying to change?)

**Audience**  
(Who are you trying to influence?)

**Audience Analysis**  
(How do you connect with your audience?)

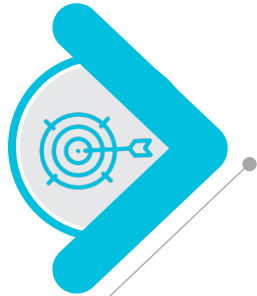
**Messages and Ask**  
(What do you want them to know and do?)

**Tactics and Channels**  
(How do you communicate with them?)

**Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Learning**  
(How do you know if you have influenced them?)

Clearly define communication objectives as multiple policy changes and reforms announced during a crisis can confuse vulnerable beneficiaries

## Step 1: Objective (What are you trying to change?)



**Focused:** To enable the beneficiaries understand various policy measures announced by government during COVID-19 including changes in existing social protection programs



**Timely:** To ensure no beneficiary misses their entitlement due to delayed communication about the program details

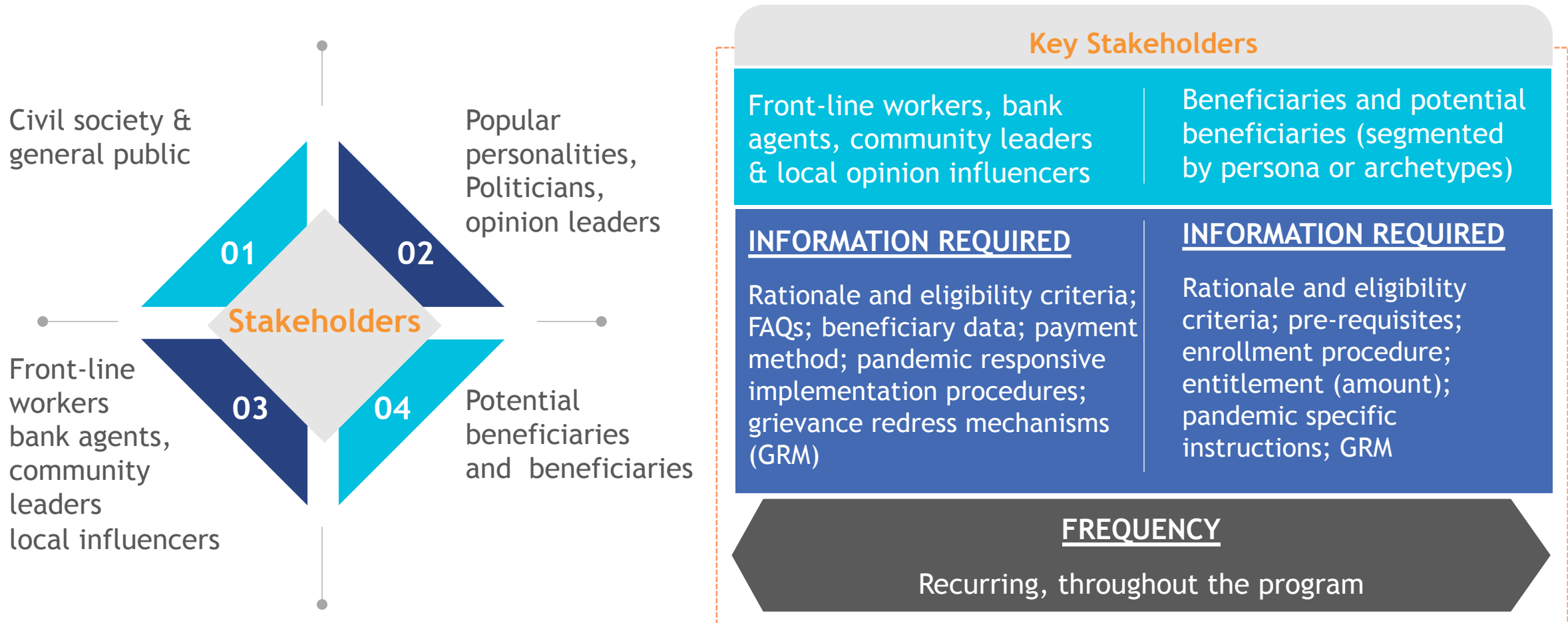


**Transparent:** To help beneficiaries understand the political announcements without leaving any room for manipulation /misconceptions



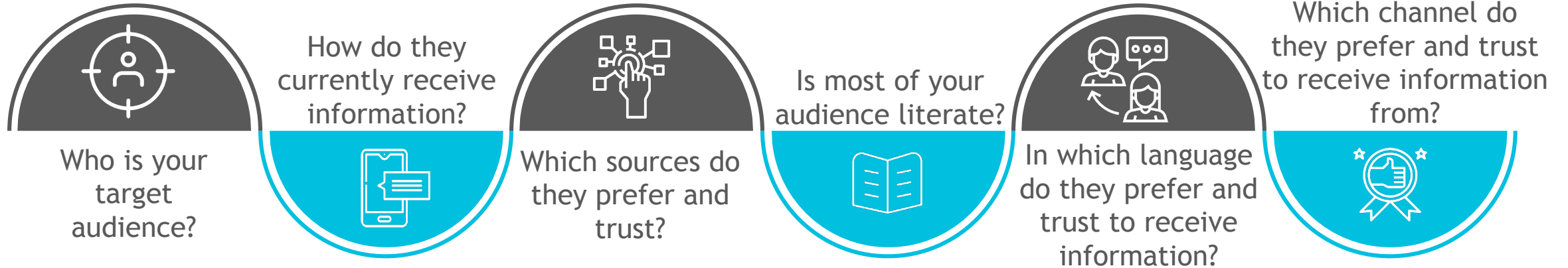
Customize the content and frequency of communication based on the nature and involvement of the many stakeholders involved in the program


**Step 2: Audience (Who are you trying to influence?)**



Identify and analyze the stakeholders addressed by the communication strategy to tailor messages, channels and “teachable moments” suitable for them

### Step 3: Audience analysis (How do you connect with your audience?)



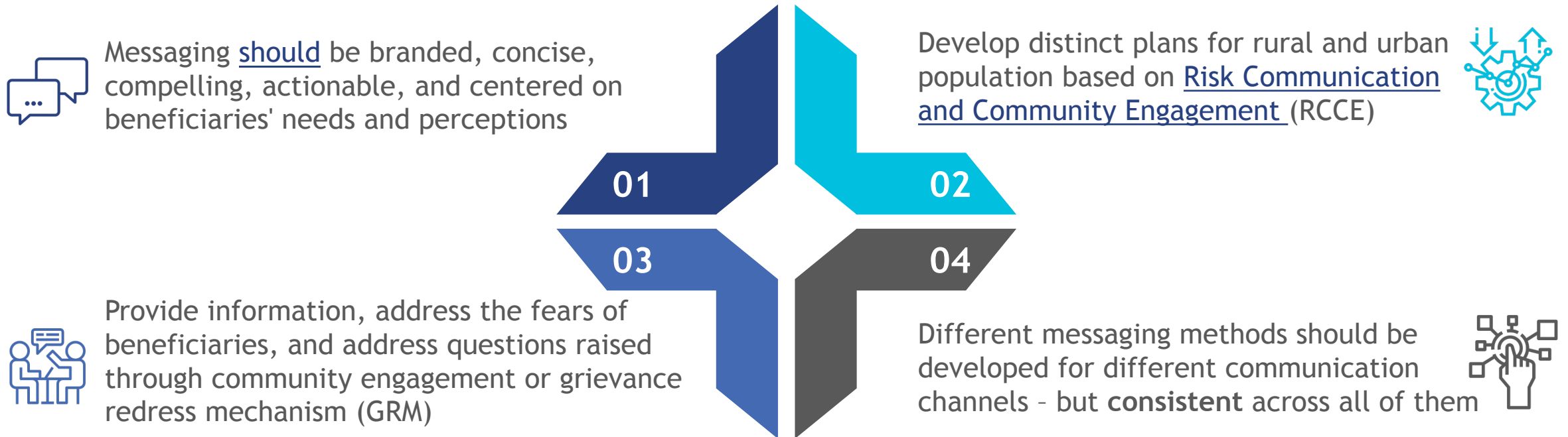
 Stakeholders and key intermediaries who can help reach target groups: community/religious leaders, local opinion influencers, youth or women’s organizations, NGOs etc. as well as bank agents/shop keepers disbursing cash/food

[https://www.unicef.org/disabilities/files/COVID-19\\_engagement\\_children\\_and\\_adults\\_with\\_disabilities\\_final.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/disabilities/files/COVID-19_engagement_children_and_adults_with_disabilities_final.pdf)  
<https://communityengagementhub.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/05/CE-low-resource-settings-distance-April-2020.pdf>

Messaging should be branded, clear, continuous, and tailored for beneficiaries/front-line workers to enhance the efficiency and accessibility of cash transfer or food relief programs

#### Step 4: Messages and ask (What do you want them to know and do?)

### A branded, consistent but differentiated communication plan



- Language of the messaging should be simple, and vernacular
- Messaging should be designed to overcome exclusion factors such as illiteracy, disability, etc.

<https://www.microsave.net/2014/09/11/communication-the-achilles-heel-of-direct-benefit-transfers-part-i/>  
<https://www.microsave.net/2014/09/09/communication-the-achilles-heel-of-direct-benefit-transfers-part-ii/>

The efficacy of a channel is dependent on its outreach, engagement, and cost-effectiveness; adopt multiple channels for wider outreach

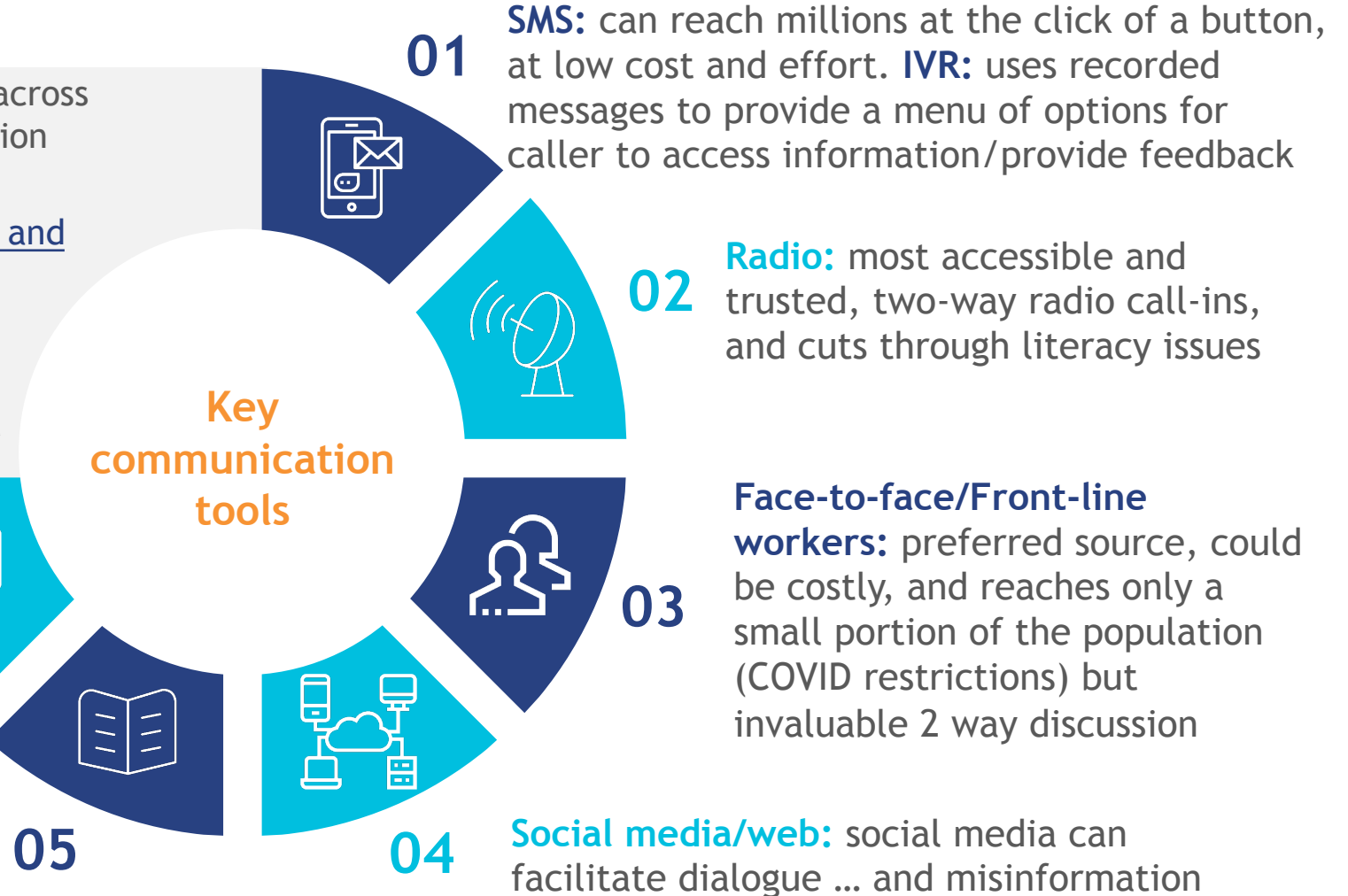
## Step 5: Tactics and Channels (How do you communicate with them?)

### Considerations for communication channels

- Use and access to variety of channels vary across gender, age groups, literacy rate, and location (urban v. rural) and countries
- Select channels based on reach, frequency, and credibility
- Provide effective two-way communication
- Provide means to 'face-to-face' and 'oral communication' as it is valued the most - it allows questions

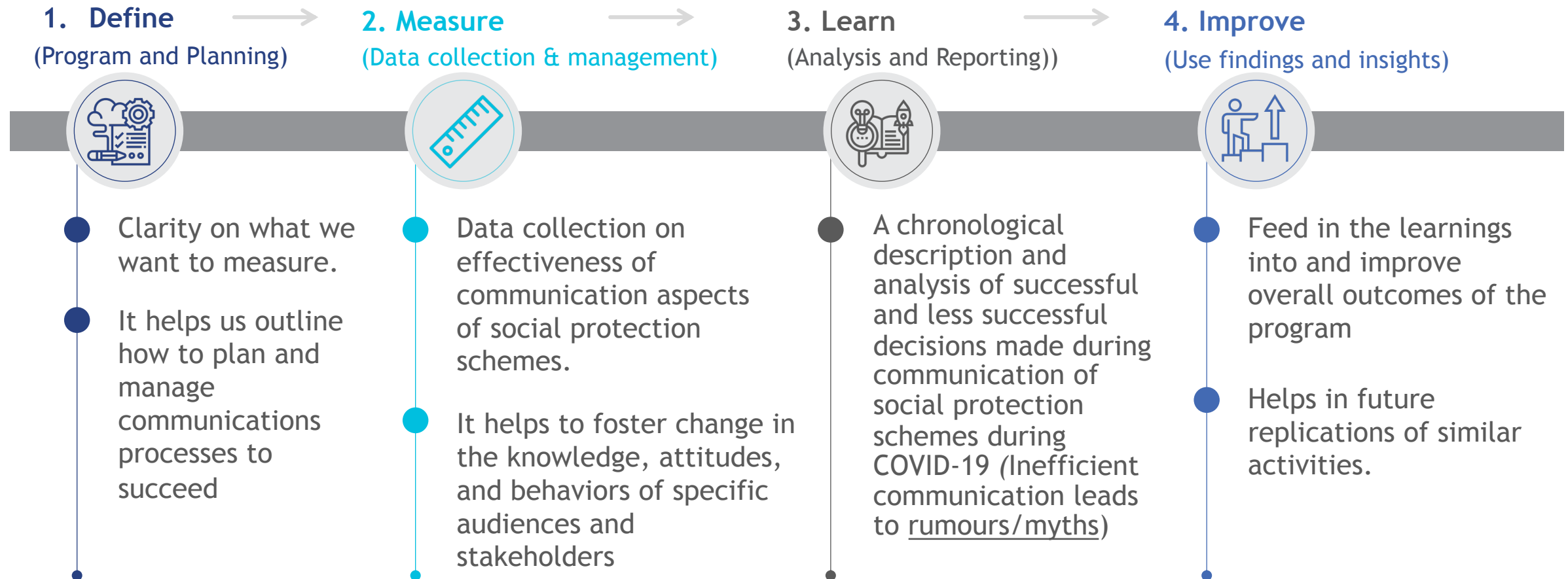
**Television:** spread macro level information; needs to be used with other communication tools to raise program level nuanced information

**Posters, newspapers, and noticeboards:** traditional method, and use of graphics are preferred for oral segment



Ensure that communications are strategic: understand and learn from what works, what doesn't, when and for whom ... and adjust accordingly

## Step 6: Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, & Learning (How do you know if you have influenced them?)



[https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/long-form-downloads/odi\\_rapid\\_mel\\_toolkit\\_201801.pdf](https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/long-form-downloads/odi_rapid_mel_toolkit_201801.pdf)  
<https://bit.ly/2BZvinl>  
<https://onthinktanks.org/articles/monitoring-your-comms-try-this/>