

Development of the Interfederal RCCE-IM plan for Health Crises

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Crisis communication – FPS Public Health



Health
Food Chain Safety
Environment

Introduction and COVID-19 Impact



Global Disruption and Response

COVID-19 caused widespread societal disruption, requiring rapid state mobilization and organizational adaptation.

Communication Challenges

Communications teams struggled to effectively reach target audiences, gain citizens' support, and counter misinformation during the crisis.

Parliamentary Commission Recommendations

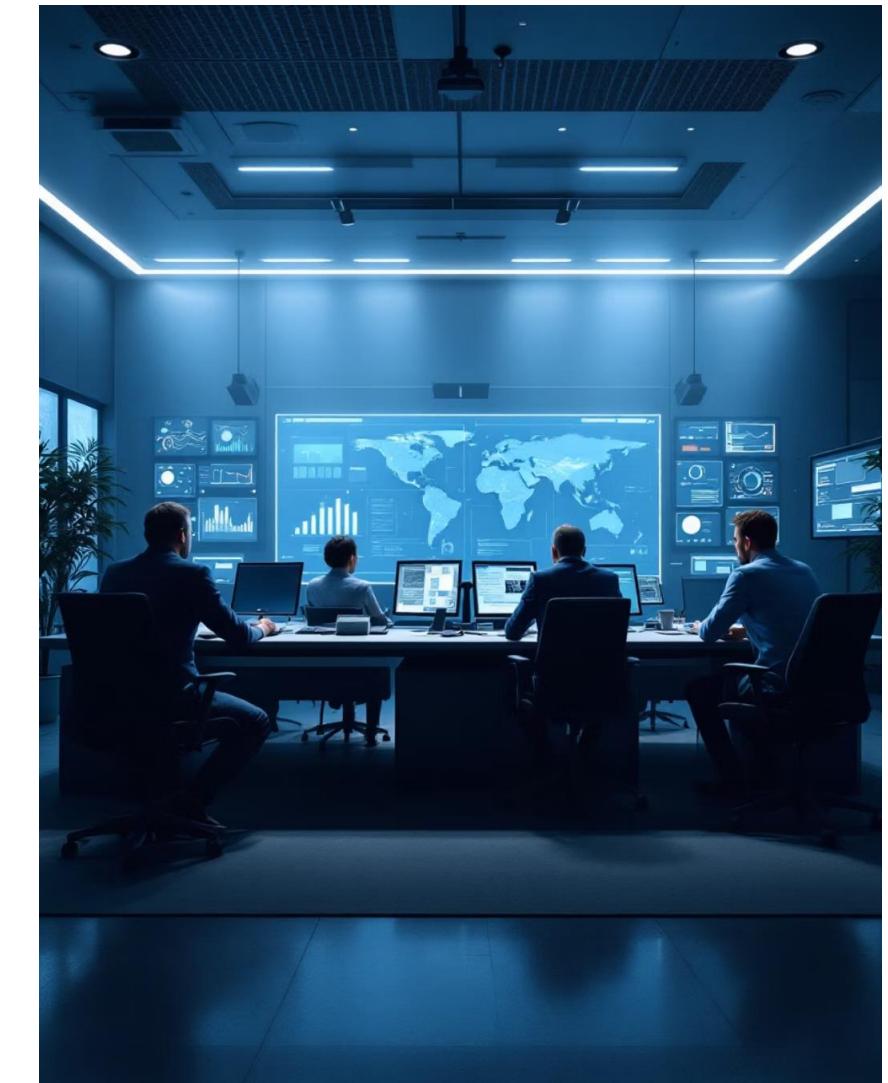
In 2021, a parliamentary commission conducted an in-depth analysis of Belgium's crisis response.

Conclusions:

Belgium must better prepare to face this type of crisis.

Among the recommendations, several directly concern communication:

- Integrate a communication component into a global pandemic plan
- Develop strategies to foster public support and engagement
- Actively combat misinformation
- Integrate crisis communication experts into each FPS crisis unit



Generic Preparedness Plan

1

Crisis Department Creation

Establishment of the FPS Public Health crisis department: "DG Preparedness and Response to health emergencies"

2

Generic Plan Development

Elaboration of the Generic Preparedness Plan with a communication module. This plan includes a dedicated “public communication” module, which outlines the responsibilities of communication units in the event of a health crisis, namely:

- Developing an operational crisis communication plan
- Identifying and maintaining communication networks
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities through cooperation agreements

Collaboration with WHO

1 December 2023

Participation in the WHO RCCE-IM Forum

- Discovery of the RCCE-IM tools
- Plan creator
- Capacity mapping

2 February 2024

Two-day workshop with WHO and crisis partners

- Gaps are identified
- Recommendations

3 Decision Made

Co-create an operational interfederal RCCE-IM plan for health crises



Bilateral Meetings and Political Validation

Bilateral Meetings

Conducted with each partner to understand needs, obstacles, methodologies, and planning

Political Approval

Presentation to the college of FPS Presidents resulted in project approval and designation of two contributors per organization

Outcomes of Bilateral Meetings

Engagement and Positive Dynamics

- Partners are motivated and engaged from the outset
- Co-creation of a national RCCE-IM plan

Double Benefit

- Opportunity to integrate RCCE-IM capacities into their strategy
- Supports capacity-building and strengthens resilience to crises

Collaboration & Effectiveness

- Challenging budgetary context → importance of pooling tools, channels, and human resources
- Assigning the right skills to the right roles

Essential Community-Based Approach

Foundation for effective crisis communication and response



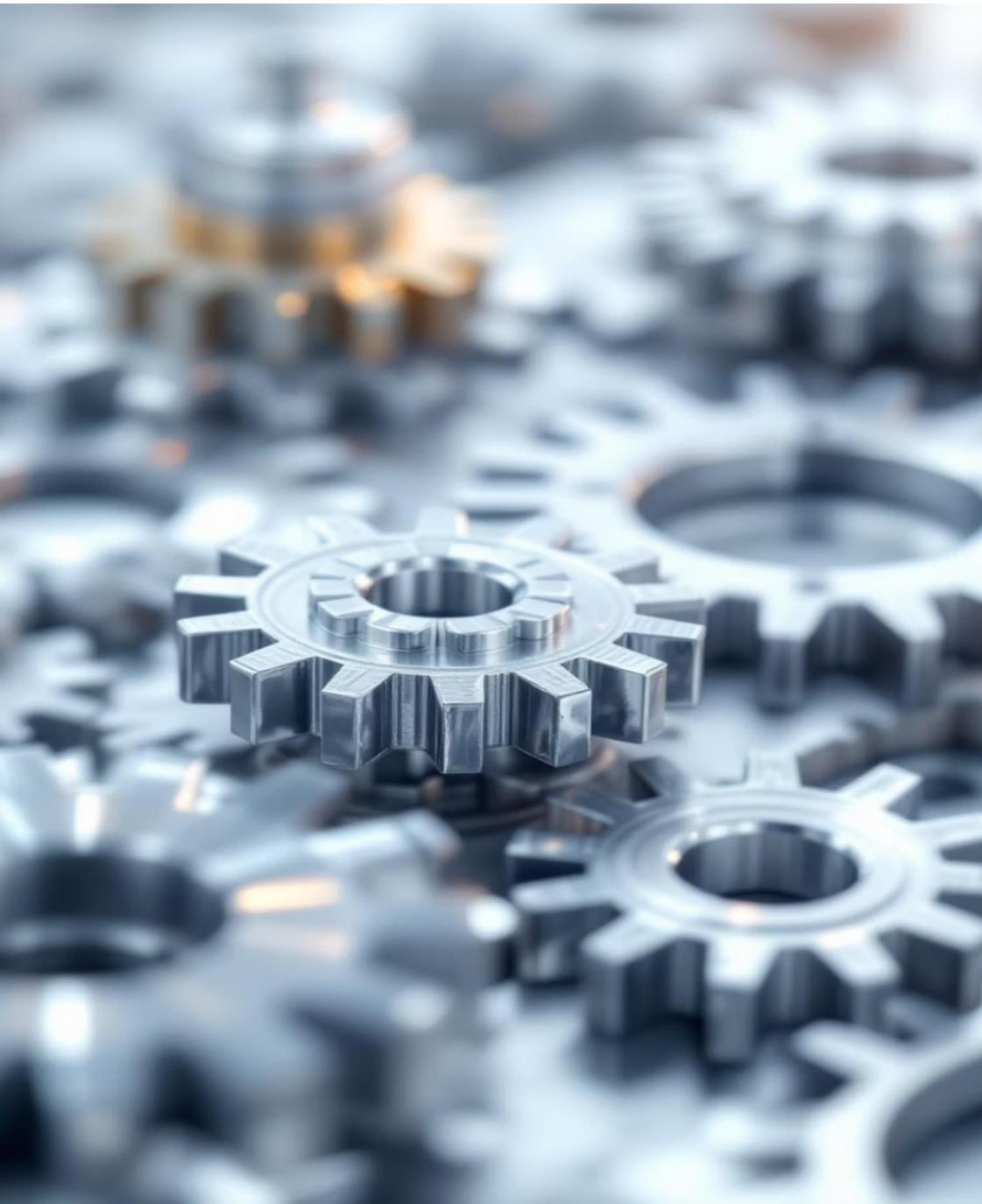
Challenges and Opportunities

Areas of Concern

- Tight timeline
- Human resources extremely limited
- No dedicated budget
- Significant investment in time and effort

Opportunities

- Support of WHO Europe
- Evaluation by international RCCE-IM experts
- Strengthen our RCCE-IM expertise
- Increase our resilience



Methodology



T0

Scoping Session: Preparatory reading before each module

2

T0+4 Weeks

Hybrid workshop (preferably in person)

3

T0+6 Weeks

Sending consolidated version and reminder for next module

4

T0+8 Weeks

Partner approval and submission to WHO

Tools

Online collaborative platform that includes:



WHO's Pocket Plan Creator

Direct link to WHO planning tools



Agenda



WHO Reference Documents

Foundational guidance materials



WHO Case Studies

Real-world examples and best practices



Belgian Methodology

Customized approach for each module

Conclusions

Our core belief: collaboration, co-construction across public services, and community integration are vital to crisis communication.

Backed by WHO, a proven methodology, and committed partners, we possess the tools to develop an effective, inter-federal crisis communication plan, fully integrating RCCE-IM.

This plan will ensure rapid response, clear communication, and enhanced collective resilience, empowering us against future crises.