



# Zika Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) Discussion: Cultural Competence

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# What the public seeks from your communication

Five public desires

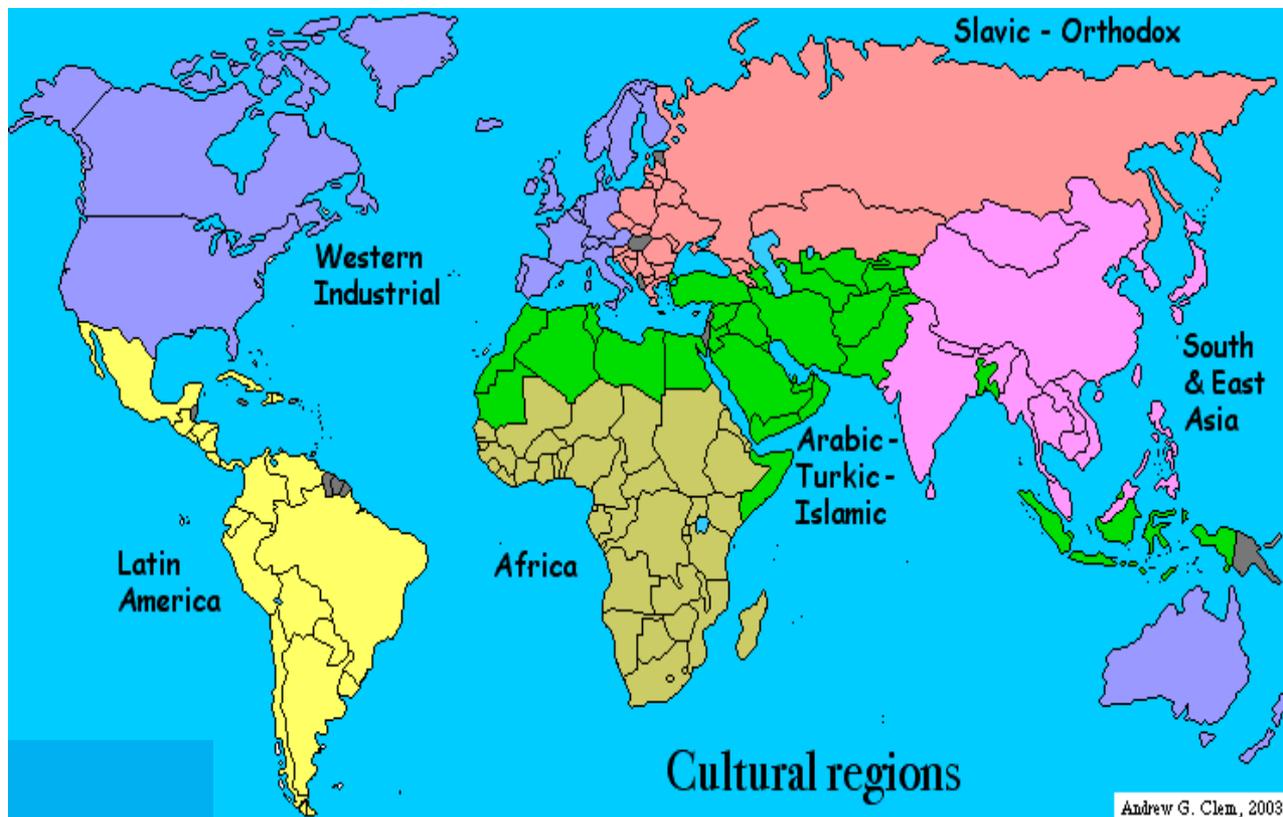
1. Gain wanted facts.
2. Empower decision making.
3. Be involved as a participant, not spectator.
4. Provide watch guard over resource allocation.
5. Recover or preserve well-being and normalcy.



## **Cultural Competence and Crises**

# Communication assumptions

- Job to prevent illness or death, restore or maintain calm, engender confidence in response
- Emergencies are chaotic so roles should be simplified
- Confusion is reduced with fast, relevant, simple and consistent messages
- Communication resources will be limited



# What we know

- The more the public knows about our efforts to openly share information, the more they trust us
- Messages are judged based on trustworthiness
- Some differences don't matter, some do

# Differences that matter

- Role of culture
  - All individuals like no other (individual)
  - All individuals like some others (culture)
  - All individuals like all others (homo sapiens)
- Collectivism and Individualism (in-group versus out-group)
- Cultural beliefs held more strongly during crisis
- Communication styles differ by culture

# Let's discuss what culture is . . .

- Values, language, customs, ethics, symbols, heroes: 9, 9 , 9
- Example: culture general—enter new culture look for differences in: authority, delegation, etiquette, communication styles
- Example: culture specific—know the specifics of a culture as it **compares to your own**



# Understand acculturation

- **Definition of acculturation. 1 :** cultural modification of an individual, group, or people by adapting to or borrowing traits from another culture; also : a merging of cultures as a result of prolonged contact.



Copycat behavior drives acculturation

## Quick exercise: How cultures differ

- Crowd or audience behaviors
- How often we smile or to whom
- How we see old age
- How open or guarded we are with information
- What is or is not ethical behavior
- Importance of competition
- How time is understood and used
- The importance of harmony in a group
- What's polite or impolite
- If, how and when we touch each other
- What is beautiful or ugly
- What we believe we need or don't need



# Value of cultural competence in a crisis

- Reduces ethnocentric thinking and behavior (adaptability in crisis is a strength)
- Trust builds more quickly
- Beware of cultural “gotchas” in self and others

**Cultural  
Taboo**

“Something that is unacceptable in a culture, even though it may be acceptable in others.”

# Cultural Conflict

- Cultural conflict dimensions: content and relational all conflicts have-- but cultural conflict adds the third one--"a clash of cultural values."
- Acknowledge conflict contains a cultural dimension
- Understanding your own culture and developing cultural awareness by acquiring a broad knowledge of values and beliefs of other cultures

## Jennifer asks:

- Would love to hear more about how to communicate and write about Zika for non-English speaking audiences.
- How do we reach this group? What are the best tools to communicate with them? Especially Spanish speakers and those who are from Zika infected countries.
- What is the best way to get our information to them – social media, faith groups, cultural centers, traditional advertising? This is a constant challenge.

# El virus del Zika

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the CDC website in Spanish. The address bar shows the URL `http://espanol.cdc.gov/enes/zika/index.html`. The page title is "El virus del Zika | CDC". The main content area features a large banner with a world map and a mosquito, titled "VIRUS DEL ZIKA ACTUALIZACIÓN" and "Casos de zika en Florida". The sidebar on the right contains a "Panorama general" section with two articles: "Mujeres embarazadas con una prueba de laboratorio que indica infección por el virus del Zika\*" and "Casos de enfermedad por el virus del Zika informados a ArboNET\*".

El virus del Zika

ÍNDICE A-Z

Idioma: Español

Este sitio se actualiza constantemente. Algunos textos pueden estar en inglés hasta que sean traducidos.

**VIRUS DEL ZIKA**  
**ACTUALIZACIÓN**  
Casos de zika en Florida

Casos de zika en Florida

**Panorama general**

[Mujeres embarazadas con una prueba de laboratorio que indica infección por el virus del Zika\\*](#)

- Estados de los EE. UU. y el DC: 433
- Territorios de los EE. UU.: 422

\*Fuente: Registros de embarazos al 21 de julio del 2016

[Más sobre los resultados](#)

[Casos de enfermedad por el virus del Zika informados a ArboNET\\*](#)

- Estados de los EE. UU. y DC: 1658
- Territorios de los EE. UU.: 4,750

\*Fuente: ArboNET al 27 de julio de 2016

`http://espanol.cdc.gov/enes/zika/intheus/florida-update.html`

# Zika Communication Resources

Una persona que fue picada por un mosquito infectado durante un viaje.



Una persona fue picada por un mosquito infectado durante un viaje.

Los síntomas pueden comenzar de 3 a 7 días después de la picadura de un mosquito infectado.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Para más información: [www.cdc.gov/chikungunya](http://www.cdc.gov/chikungunya) • [www.cdc.gov/dengue](http://www.cdc.gov/dengue) • <http://espanol.cdc.gov/zika/>

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# Consider communication barriers

- Messenger/Message (mistrust, language, taboo action, blow to economic security)
- Receiver (language & no proxy; no way to identify; fear of coming for help, warrants, runaways, undocumented)
- Tool:  
<http://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/resources/pdf/specialpopulationsassessment.pdf>

## Chris asked:

- Being a border state to Florida and already seeing cases related to travel, can you address some of the technologies that we're seeing in Miami-that appear to be from the CDC.
- In short, many of our media outlets are getting the same information over and over about Zika prevention and now a U.S. based travel advisory.
- I was curious when I saw video of teams providing on site door to door (potential patient) testing and handheld sprayers (not sure if that was local government or paid exterminators).

# Mosquito control technologies



## Six Principles of CERC -

- **Be First:** If the information is yours to provide by organizational authority—do so as soon as possible. If you can't—then explain how you are working to get it.
- **Be Right:** Give facts in increments. Tell people what you know when you know it, tell them what you don't know, and tell them if you will know relevant information later.
- **Be Credible:** Tell the truth. Do not withhold to avoid embarrassment or the possible “panic” that seldom happens. Uncertainty is worse than not knowing—rumors are more damaging than hard truths.

# Six Principles of CERC

- **Express Empathy:** Acknowledge in words what people are feeling—it builds trust.
- **Promote Action:** Give people things to do. It calms anxiety and helps restore order.
- **Show Respect:** Treat people the way you want to be treated—the way you want your loved ones treated—always—even when hard decisions must be communicated.

# Trust and Mistrust

- Stakeholders judge the response to an issue or crisis based on trust.
- Trust is the natural consequence of promises fulfilled.
- Mistrust is an outgrowth of the perception that promises were broken and values violated.
- CDC fulfills trust by combining our best science with strong ethics and values.

# Acting Trustworthy

- Share information early.
- Acknowledge the concerns of others.
- Under promise and over deliver.
- Select a spokesperson who is never condescending.
- Engage third-party validators and advocates.

# Zika Community Action Response Toolkit

- ZCART is now online: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/pdfs/z-cart-plan.pdf>

# Risk Communication Resources

- CDC Zika website: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>
- Zika communications resources: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/comm-resources/index.html>
- CERC resources: <http://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/index.asp>
- Emergency Risk Communication Training: Atlanta, August 10-12, 2016
- To sign up for the Emergency Partners newsletter to receive Zika and other updates from the CDC, please click [here](#)
- Contact [cercrequest@cdc.gov](mailto:cercrequest@cdc.gov) for questions

For more information, contact CDC  
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)  
TTY: 1-888-232-6348 [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

