

Rabies Awareness Month Campaign 2025



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RCCE

Five Core Capacities



Core Capacity 1: Risk Communication Systems

- RCCE has **strengthened the surge capacity of communicators and community engagement experts**, such as risk communication, health promotion and social science experts at national, provincial, district level and in some health care settings including hospitals.

Core Capacity 2: Internal and Partner Coordination

- RCCE has **strengthened engagement with partners** to share information in a timely manner to avoid inconsistent and **potentially conflicting guidance**. **Broadened demand creation activities** and the reach of community engagement by leveraging partners' strengths and outreach capacities.

Core Capacity 3: Public Communication

- RCCE has made sure that **messages are consistent across sectors and levels**, information is **shared regularly (ideally each day at the same time of the day)**, while also ensuring that the public knows where to obtain up-to-date information regularly (e.g., **websites, daily press briefings, hotlines**).

Core Capacity 4: Community Engagement

- RCCE has **maintained 2-way communication with affected audiences** to understand and respond to their concerns, attitudes, beliefs, and barriers to following health guidance through established mechanisms such as hotlines, operated by retired nurses and students and call-in radio programs.

Core Capacity 5: Addressing uncertainty, perceptions and managing misinformation (dynamic listening and infodemic management)

- RCCE **convene multi-stakeholder feedback meetings bi-weekly to capture** common concerns, questions, misunderstandings and misinformation online and offline. They ensure that the results of monitoring traditional, social media and conversations in call centres and in the communities are assessed and analysed rapidly through a dedicated team set up for this purpose.

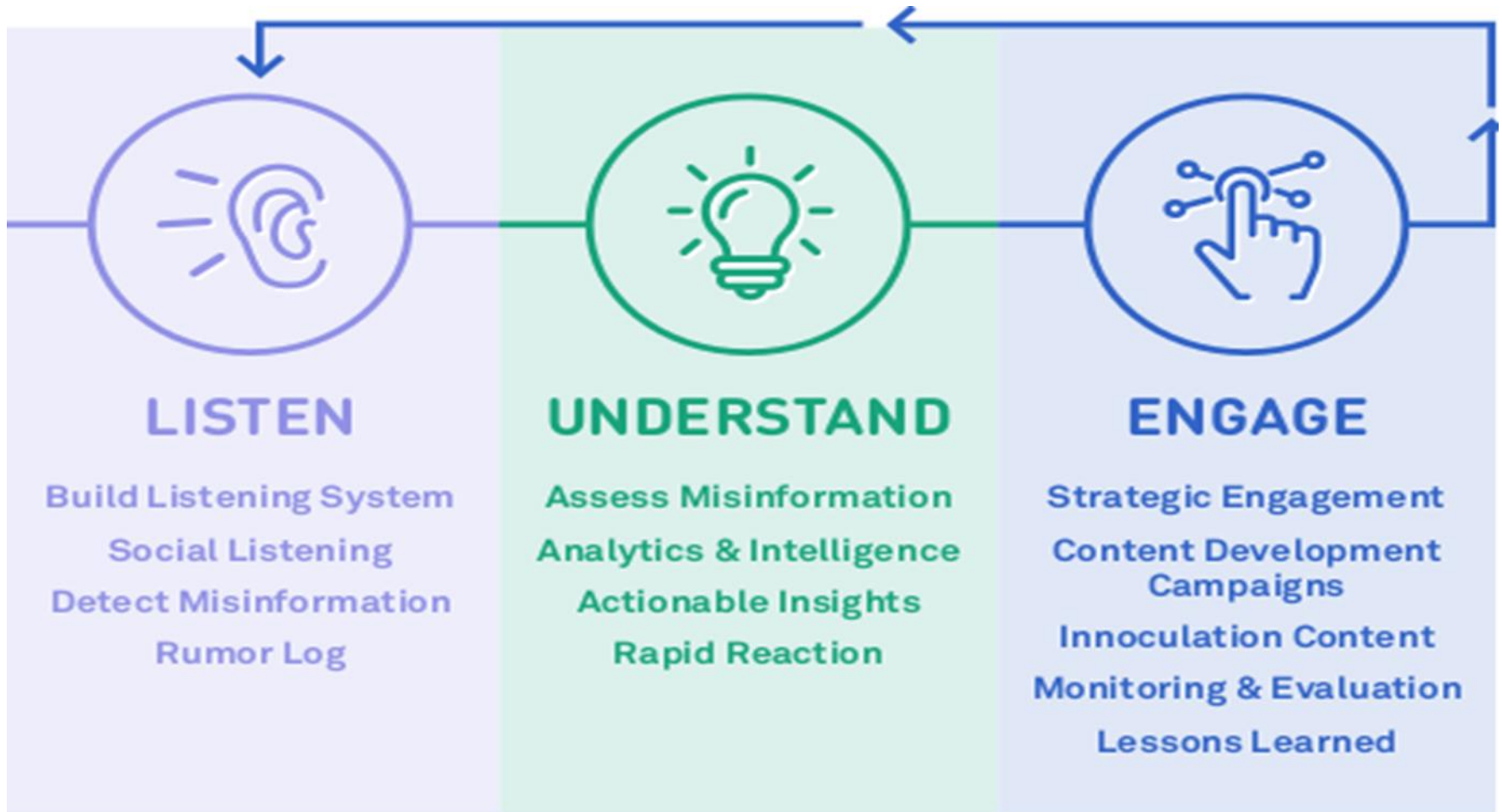
Risk **Communication** Objectives

- ❑ Provide accurate, timely information to **targeted audiences** to make **informed health decisions** to mitigate the risk and take protective and **preventive measures** and **actions**,
- ❑ Reach communities with behaviour-focused rabies messages combatting misinformation, rumors and myths related to rabies.
- ❑ Empower the public, especially the communities/provinces at high risk with regular information in accurate manner,
- ❑ **Foster partner collaboration** for rabies infection with all relevant stakeholders, to jointly,
- ❑ **Maintain or restore trust and confidence** to manage the outbreak/rabies cases.
- ❑ **Monitor community feedback, complaints** and **address** them timely.

Community **Engagement** Objectives

- ❑ Involving **community participation** in decisions, planning, and actions that affect their lives.
- ❑ **Building trust, listening** to voices/dialogues, and **working together** with all key stakeholders (internal & external) for positive change.
- ❑ **Community participation and ownership** of the rabies campaign and ensuring feedback mechanisms.
- ❑ **Coordinate** the community engagement activities in the affected provinces/districts, and consolidate feedback,
- ❑ **Development, Review and pre-testing** of rabies key messages,
- ❑ Ensure the translation and distribution of IEC materials,
- ❑ **Monitor & evaluate** impact of community engagement interventions
- ❑ Regular meeting with key stakeholders (internal & external)

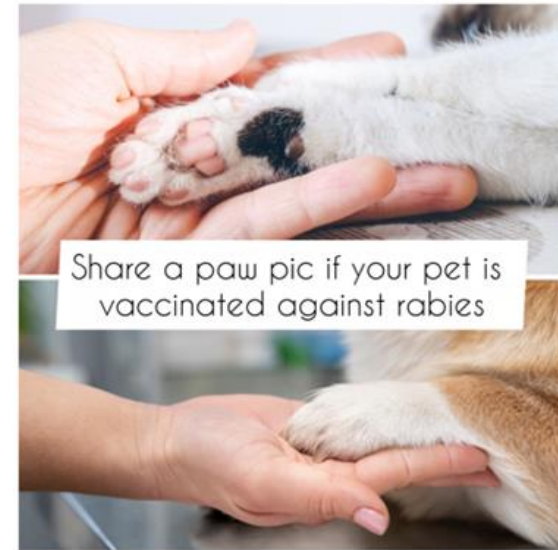
Rumours and Misinformation Management



- Rabies is a fatal viral disease transmitted mainly through bites of infected animals.
- Dogs are the primary source of human rabies infections.
- The disease is preventable with timely vaccination.

Focus Areas:

- Raise public awareness about rabies dangers and prevention.
- Promote responsible pet ownership and mandatory vaccination.
- Facilitate access to free or affordable rabies vaccination for pets.
- Encourage prompt medical response to rabies exposure such as animal bites, etc.



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Key Messages and Communication Channels

Key Messages

- Rabies is deadly but 100% preventable with vaccination.
- Vaccinate all dogs and cats regularly.
- Wash bites immediately and seek medical care.
- Report suspected rabid animals to authorities.

Communication Channels

- Social media.
- Radio & TV interviews.
- Podcast interview.
- Blog article.
- External & Internal Newsletters



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- Conducted a social media campaign in September with 11 informative posts across all platforms.
- Posts aimed to raise public awareness about rabies prevention, vaccination, and bite management.
- Content included engaging visuals and key messages aligned with national rabies elimination goals.
- Emphasised responsible pet ownership and the importance of vaccinating dogs and cats.
- Informative articles were shared through internal and external newsletters to raise awareness among employees and the wider public.
- Media statement issued on 25 September.
- Interviews on “Die Groot Ontbyt” on kykNET, dstv channel 144



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- Produced and aired a podcast interview featuring an expert discussing the rabies virus, symptoms, and prevention.
- The podcast helped deepen public understanding and complemented social media outreach.
- These efforts contributed to increased community engagement and awareness about rabies risks and prevention.
- The department remains committed to ongoing education and vaccination support.



RABIES AWARENESS MONTH INTERVIEW

AGRI-Talk
Emasimini Sohwenkwa

[Listen Now](#)

Discussion:
Rabies Awareness

Dr Alicia Cloete
State Veterinarian
Disease Control
Animal Health

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 **G20**
SOUTH AFRICA 2025

 **NDP**
2030

A NATION THAT WORKS FOR ALL

Campaign Results and Ongoing Commitment

- The department's rabies social media campaign in September achieved strong online engagement, with many retweets, likes, shares, and active audience interaction.
- The campaign successfully raised public awareness about rabies prevention, vaccination, and responsible pet ownership.
- The podcast interview further enhanced understanding of the virus and complemented social media efforts.
- These outcomes demonstrate the effectiveness of our communication strategy in reaching and educating communities.
- Rabies awareness is a year-round priority; we will continue to engage the public beyond September to support sustained vigilance and vaccination efforts.
- Together, we contribute to the national goal of eliminating dog-mediated human rabies by 2030.



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Holidays Rollout

- Digital awareness campaign to continue across social media platforms during the festive season.
- Focus on residents and holidaymakers in the Cape Provinces.
- Raise awareness about rabies in Cape fur seals, highlighting:
 - Warning signs such as aggressive or disoriented behaviour.
 - The need to avoid contact and report sightings to authorities.
 - Urging anyone bitten or scratched to seek immediate medical attention.
 - Promote seal safety and responsible coastal behaviour.
- Remind pet owners travelling to coastal areas to ensure vaccinations are up to date.
- Proposed radio awareness campaigns to reach wider audiences through: Thobela FM, Phalaphala FM, Munghana Lonene FM – Limpopo, Ukhozi FM – KwaZulu-Natal Lesedi FM – Free State, Umhlobo Wenene FM – Eastern Cape.
- Develop in-content TV adverts featuring practical rabies prevention tips, while highlighting One Health collaboration and safe animal handling practices.



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Thank You



agriculture, land reform
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