Background: Risk communication is one of the core capacities under International Health Regulation 2005 that all Member States need to have to be able to effectively respond to Public Health Events of International Concern (PHEIC). All Member States are required to be IHR compliant by 2016 and need to have an all hazard national risk communication. The Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework also recommends that the Member States have risk communication capacity.

WHO support to Member States on risk communication: Consolidating all risk communication related activities, Public Information and Advocacy Unit in collaboration with Health Security and Emergencies Response has chalked out a three pronged strategy to support Member States in the Region be IHR compliant on risk communication.

1. Needs assessment - An online survey was conducted in April 2015 to seek inputs from IHR focal persons from all Member States on the status of their risk communication plans and the support that they require from WHO. Almost all Member States requested WHO for support to build this capacity.

2. Regional workshop on risk communication for IHR / PIP – With almost all states seeking support for a clearer understanding of risk communication, building capacity and drafting of the national all hazard risk communication plan, a regional workshop is being planned on 28 & 29 October 2015.

3. Support to individual Members States as per request – Following the regional workshop, WHO would provide support to Member States, as per their request, for their national all hazard risk communication plan.

Objectives of the Regional Workshop: -

General Objective: Create a common understanding of risk communication capacity for IHR compliance and under PIP framework.

Specific Objective:
- Member States to initiate a roadmap with timeline for all national hazard IHR risk communication plan, including PIP risk communication plan.
- Mapping of stakeholders for IHR and PIP risk communication plans.
- Sharing of best practices and challenges.

Participants:

From the Member States –
- IHR focal persons,
- Communication officer / officer responsible for coordinating communication response at the Ministry of Health / Government, specially in case of a public health emergencies.

From WHO Country Offices –
- IHR focal persons,
- Communication Officer / Communication Focal Persons.