## Worksheet 7-5: Guiding questions for developing communications strategies

The following questions can guide you as you develop your communication strategies:

* Who are your audiences?

You will have multiple target audiences, including, for example: the various stakeholder groups, supportive political leadership, oppositional political leadership, providers and other staff working in the health system, your intended beneficiaries, and the population at large. You also have internal audiences, including the members of your Health Reform Team and other experts and consultants you have brought into the effort.

* What message do you want to convey to each audience?

Knowing your different audiences allows you to shape your messages. This is the core of your communication strategy: framing your work specifically in order to appeal to each audience. Your messages should be presented in simple language and framed to demonstrate how the health reform fits with the audience’s ethics and values. As you develop your messages, consider: what do you want each audience to learn, understand, or do?

* How do you reach each audience?

This consideration includes three components of communication: medium, messenger, and timing. When you have determined what messages you want to deliver, then you have to figure out: the best way to deliver it, who you want to be seen representing the health reform, and when the audience is open to receiving information. These can vary depending on your local context and the reform package. Are members of the Health Reform Team influential enough to deliver your messages (for example, on talk radio programs) or do you need a celebrity spokesperson to draw attention? Are written materials and a passive website enough to share information or do you have to train community advocates to go house-to-house to share details on the reform package?

* What resources are required to develop and deliver your communications?

Think about the budget (how much, where it comes from, what restrictions it comes with, what reporting is required, etc.). Also, think more broadly about resources, such as: staff time and skills, expert guidance, technological requirements, materials and supplies, access to mass media and social media, time to prepare and test messaging with intended audiences, and time and effort involved in engaging and educating spokespeople and other influential supporters.