**KEY MESSAGE DEVELOPMENT**

**Disclaimer:**

This template/document/framework is not intended to be comprehensive or exhaustive - rather, it seeks to provide a framework, be a reference, stimulate discussions, generate ideas, and facilitate further analysis to encourage additional exploration and research and policy development for your organization or group.

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**Preamble:**

This document is to serve as a framework when creating key messages.

**KEY MESSAGE DEVELOPMENT**

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| **What is a key message?** | * A key message is a short approved statement from your organization. * It is high level with some detail that can help the reader understand an issue, position, or outcome. |
| **What should go into a key message?** | * A key message should contain factual, critical information on a particular matter. * The messaging should be in alignment with an organization’s mandate or policy, when practicable. |
| **What should NOT go into a key message?** | * A key message should not contain opinions or speculative information. |
| **How long should a key message be?** | * A key message should be no longer than one or two sentences. * Each message may have short supplementary points that provide more detailed information. |
| **When should you use key messages?** | * Key messages should be used any time you need to share critical information with stakeholders such as in press releases, speaking notes, letters, social media posts, etc. |
| **Who should approve a key message?** | * A director, manager, or other designated decision-making authority within the organization. |

**SAMPLE SCENARIO:**

There is a fire on the northwest side of the community. Five hectares of farmland have burned. There are three homes in the area. The area is also heavily wooded with three different historical sites. At this time, the fire is controlled as there are roads that will prevent the fire from jumping the road into the wooded area. The emergency managers will continue to monitor the fire throughout the night to ensure the fire does not reach the woods. Authorities have been made aware of the situation and are ready to provide assistance. Residents have been informed they may need to evacuate should the fire worsen.

**KEY MESSAGE CREATION:**

You have received ample information; you need to summarize it into two sentences to make a key message.

**What key words do you want to emphasize in this key message?**

* northwest side
* five hectares of farmland have burned
* controlled
* evacuate

**Key Message:**

* A fire on the northwest side of the community has burned five hectares of farmland. The fire is controlled at this time but residents are on standby to evacuate if required.