



CAPACITY

A F R I C A I N S T I T U T E

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WASH ASSIGNMENTS 1:

Question 1

1. Suppose you work with a community radio station, describe what your radio station would do to address water, sanitation and hygiene issues with regard to your i) audience, and ii) WASH messages?

Answers

Audience

WASH is the administration of processes of set elements like the provision of clean water for domestic uses, the safe removal of waste, the promotion of environmental hygiene activities and encouraging protective healthy behavioral practice amongst the population (whether or not affected).

To answer this question, I has assumed that the radio station is here in the Chipinge, Chimanimani rural area of Zimbabwe where Cyclone Idai has ravaged the landscape and taken countless lives in the past two months. Water systems were destroyed and people could not access

clean water. The cyclone also destroyed the main water reticulation system in Chipinge urban thus no water for residents for days. As a radio station we have tool that can be used to communicate WASH principles to our audience.

Its is key to work with the government, NGO and stake holders to get the right information out there in terms of where the nearest water points are. For example, there were water distribution trucks that provided clean water for the Chimanimani people at certain locations and these locations would need to be communicated. Also, some organizations are drilling boreholes thus providing clean water to drink and use in domestic activities. These locations will need to be communicated to the local people.

Toilets were destroyed and the provision of toilets is being done thus communicating these points would be important. Our audience would be looking at us to give the information to help them live in this new situation so having good hygienic practices like using aqua tabs or boiling water before drinking it. The safe removal of waste is important so that there would not be an influx of vectors like flies, rats and many more. As a radio station we need to package the messages in a way that they can hear and understand fully. In the urban areas the use of aqua tabs or boiling water for drinking would be critical. We will be communicating with our audience on how to keep the house clean and constant flushing of toilets and where to collect water for flushing of toilets to prevent diseases.

Independently we could facilitate the raising of funds to build toilets and drill boreholes but also communicate with the outside world about the needs on the ground thus mobilizing to help in terms of WASH activities. As some people do not have radios, we would actually create community communication center's like in shopping centers and crowded areas where we could set up speakers for people to hear the information that we will be relating. The information about common diseases that can be observed would be aired out so that early cases of diseases can be identified and cured appropriately.

WASH messages?

The messages need to be in different local languages so that the audience can interpret them correctly. The advantages of using radio to relay messages is, it is one of the most widely used forms of communication and entertainment used by low income groups of people being able to communicate effectively to that section of the group. According to The Sphere Handbook (hereinafter referred to as Sphere) (2018), "Messages need to be adapted for children and persons with disabilities and develop test messages to ensure they are understandable across differences in age, sex, educational level and language." In our situation Ndaou, Shona and English are the common languages and as a radio station, having programs in those languages is important. Having a toll-free hotline for feedback is important so that we can hear if the messages are effective. As a radio station we would partner with different organizations to conduct a survey that would ascertain the effectiveness of our messages and if people are

understanding it. Local productions of small scripts would be commissioned that will tell a story of a situation that will require WASH principals to alleviate and if not followed the consequences that will be negative. The messages will be about mainly promoting good hygiene practices such as, “wash hands with soap before eating or preparing food’, ‘use aqua tabs in drinking water or boil it’, ‘use mosquito nets to stop the spread of malaria’. Messages about symptoms of common diseases will also help for patients to get medical attention promptly. When there is a vaccination program, they would be broadcasted also banners that have WASH tips would also be necessary to use.

Basically, a radio station is powerful in relaying WASH information to the masses. WASH is touching the fundamentals of life and the improvement of wellbeing. Communicating is through radio shows, presentation, radio soap operas, and the radio Facebook page will get the message out and the communities discussing and implementing thus the less likely for that audience to be affected by preventable diseases.

Question 2

2. In your own words, what is your understanding of public health and what are its key elements?

Answers

Public health is the prevention of disease through practicing good health principals in small and large communities. Public health focuses on

Prevention and Policy Development and Population health surveillance.

Prevention:

Hygiene promotion reduces the risk the community has to get diseases and thus increasing dignity, security, reducing money to medical fees, more children go to school. This is done by working with communities to teach them on the basic and important ways of achieving good hygiene principals. Washing hands with soap before eating or after using the toilet is a simple but effective way of curbing the outbreak of diseases including diarrheal diseases in a community. The use of toilets that are clean and do not smell is important so that communities can be healthy but there should be a system of disposing excreta that is environmentally friendly and hygienic. The collection and storage of water is important. As an example, in Chipinge, Zimbabwe people still get water from open wells or open springs. It is important to educate them in ways of making it drinkable like using chlorine tab or aqua tabs, also boiling it and building covered wells. The regulating of where wells can be dug in proximity to pit latrines must be enforced as there might be the contamination of the ground water basin.

The implementation of health awareness through educational campaigns is important and also the use of mass media like T.V., radio and social media to get the message out. This is all done because of lack of local government implementation thus the low- income homes do not get the clean water from the tap. Hygiene in WASH also means we can be able to put community mechanisms that will give the community accountability and service delivery like the Community Health Club (CHC) that emphasizes on communities working together to increase

the hygiene awareness and successfully implementing on a relatively clean environment to live in.

Policy Development and population health tracing:

The above title helps in the preventions of risk to communities as outlines the policies that will serve the communities and the procedures that will need to be followed to implement public health. This includes vaccination programs (for children and adults), regulation of prescriptions drugs, safety standards and practices (to protect worker health and safety), ensuring access to clean water and air and school nutrition programs. Putting them in the current setting these are important but require the buy in of local authorities and organizations. For example, in Chipinge urban there is no public toilet that is available thus communities use the bush toilets that will increase the risk of diseases. Local authorities are not implementing the public health principals quickly. But regular campaign has been conducted by the health department to vaccinate children and it seems has been effective to curb the risk of diseases. The reduction of water fees so that anyone can afford to access tap water is another policy that has been implemented.

Research also is done so that we can see the effectiveness of the programs and are they right for the certain population we are targeting

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In summary as Public Health focuses on prevention and Policy Development and Population Health surveillance, all these aspects work hand in hand to effectively carry out programs that will decrease the risk of diseases. Without good hygiene principals the population will suffer from diseases like cholera etc. Without policies that will allow access to the implementation of hygiene projects and the monitoring and evaluation of the these the population will suffer and we might have disease outbreaks.

Question 3

3. Public health is about partnership between the different players. In a paragraph each, explain how the role of international non-profit/NGO in terms of i) recruitment ii) training iii) funding and iv) monitoring for public health projects contribute to the success or failure of those projects in the developing countries?

Answers

- i. Recruitment:
'Sphere' has clear set guidelines that if adhered to would spell out the success of the public health projects but some NGO's do not adhere to it. For example, instead of recruiting local qualified personal in Chipinge some NGO's choose recruiting personal from Harare (500km away) thus the effectiveness is not long term as they will be here for short term, compromising quality of the project, continuity is greatly affected and increase turn over of staff. But if NGO's recruit locally then the success of the project will higher. In the same breath NGO's can recruit and develop local staff who are mostly to be

resident in the area thus contributing in the success of the project long term. NGO's can in a positive way, avail to governments except staff that can properly guide and help in the implementation and monitoring of health programs thus increasing the quality of service.

ii. Training:

Taking the real-life example of my current area Chipinge during the wake of Cyclone Idai training is very important in Hygiene promotion. The role of NGO's would be facilitating and carrying out these training of community health committees. School Health Masters will be also trained health and hygiene principals. The mobilization of community leaders and stakeholders so that they can be properly trained about the different aspects of hygiene promotion is important. I heard a comment that "wouldn't well educated people know these aspects?" but the onus is on the NGO's not to assume and the situation has changed. Chimanimani, Chipinge changed overnight and now with houses taken by water and peopling living in tents there is need to train them about how to counteract different vectors for example mosquitos or flies. Also, as psychologically some are still being affected health workers and volunteers need to be trained so that they can be able to facilitate the hygienic leaving. This all will affect the success of the Hygiene project greatly and provide sustainability. Also, if women are involved in these trainings then there would be greater success to the programme. Training of local staff also provides that the programme quality and continuity is increased thus increasing the chance of success.

iii. Funding:

Here in Chipinge, Chimanimani in the wake of cyclone Idai it was apparent that the government was caught unawares and there was seemingly a lack of funding to carry out some Public health programs. For example, when the water pipes were damaged there was a lack of clean water thus NGO's funded the rehabilitation and servicing of these works. This would help the prevention of some diseases and outbreaks that would become a success of public health projects.

Some developing countries in Africa don't have the financial capabilities to support the health system that is why NGO's come to fund vaccinations and specific baby programs. For example, in Zimbabwe any child under the age of 5 years and still holds a baby card is given medical assistance at a local government hospital free also pregnant women are also given free medical care at the same hospitals. These champions the success of the Public health programme through both NGO's and Zimbabwe government working together. Hygiene and Water quality are synonymous as, if water quality not good we cannot have hygiene so carrying out water quality tests in partnership with the Health Department is important thus NGO's are helping the local authority to do the water test so that we can know that which borehole has drinkable water.

iv. Monitoring:

Monitoring is important and as situations change also the effectiveness. Monitoring helps NGO's to assess the Realtime effectiveness of the public health programme with minimum indicators they will help assess the if the program is effective and what more needs to be done. The involvement of NGO's and government in this process helps for the two partners to work together in achieving the success of the health system in the certain location. This also helps to assess if equal opportunity has been given to all levels of the population.

In summary having the partnership between NGO's and government for public health projects has its advantages that will make sure through the recruitment of the right personal the local authority has access to personnel that can help with the project, also some departments are understaffed. With the training of community health committees, school health masters and many more through the partnership with the Ministry of Health and the District School Inspector the health project can become effective. Funding

will be important to carry out the projects and lack of fuel and vehicles to go out to do these projects will need to be helped by the funding by NGO's for example. Monitoring and Evaluation will help to have a clear picture of the effectiveness and also finding out the gaps in the project that will need to be filled. Partnering with the different stakeholders will make sure the project is sustainable.

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