

DIPLOMA IN WASH

ASSIGNMENT 1

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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?

Community radio is an effective tool to spread WASH messages to the masses especially in the fragile contexts where access and security is a critical issue. Number of research studies and evaluation programs have reaffirmed this notion. A recent evaluation of BBC Media Action's WASH programs in Kenya found that the shows reached large numbers of Kenyans in the target regions, improved knowledge and cultural attitudes towards handwashing, and resulted in the adoption of good WASH practices. (BBC Media Action, Transforming Lives Through Media Around The World, (2017, June). How are local radio programs helping improve water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) practices in Kenya? Retrieved from downloads.bbc.co.uk/media_action/pdf/research-summaries/wash-in-kenya.pdf).

The added advantage to use community radio to spread WASH messages across range of audiences include its outreach to wider audiences since it is cheaper than the other media communication channels and the messages are cautiously designed in a culturally appropriate way for the target audiences. Furthermore, it also encourages listening as a group activity to foster discussions and create public demand for services.

a) What my radio station would do to address WASH issues with regard to audience?

My radio station will highlight the importance of community participation in public health promotion in prevention of diseases. It will broadcast locally relevant programs including awareness raising messages and discussions to enhance the understanding of local community regarding basic health and hygiene practices and behaviors to prevent the diseases resulting from erroneous Health & hygiene behaviors and practices. Basic focus would be on hand washing (its importance,

proper method and critical timings), proper waste management, environmental hygiene, safe water storage and food consumption.

The target audience would mainly include local community members, school teachers and children, pregnant women and their families, mothers of children less than 5 years of age and other influence makers such as policy makers to address the supply related gaps.

It will promote the dialogue between public institutions and communities through interactive dialogues and discussion. It will also support strengthening of partnership and mutual engagement between citizens and government to reinforce the shared responsibility, ownership, sustainability and participation public health projects. The timings of each program, language used to deliver the messages and its cultural and political sensitivity would be taken into serious consideration. To promote mutual dialogue and feedback, participatory method of engagement would be used where not only the citizens would be able to call and share their feedback and ask questions but they would be able to ask questions to the heads of public institutions responsible for public health projects and policy makers.

b) What my radio station would do to address WASH issues with regard to WASH messages?

My radio station will focus to spread awareness on importance of basic hygiene practices such as;

- i) Importance of hand washing on critical times
- ii) Regular hair washing
- iii) Regular brushing of teeth
- iv) Regular bath &
- v) Washing & airing the bed regularly

It will also focus to promulgate messages on safe drinking water, protection of water sources, environmental cleanliness including food consumption and proper waste

management.

The repetitiveness of messages in culturally acceptable manner will create a strong reinforcement mechanism to promote positive behavior change. Specific messages will be designed for various listeners i.e. breast feeding mothers, pregnant women, school children etc.

Apart from the messages focusing on behavior change and good WASH practices; in order to improve the supply side of WASH facilities, advocacy messages will also be delivered.

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

Public health aims at averting disease and promoting human health through organized and institutionalized exertions. It helps the public to do informed choices for healthy life. Public Health is defined as “the art and science of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organized efforts of society” (Acheson, 1988; WHO).

The great amount of effort and resources is dedicated to prevention of diseases in public health; however public health also means the public policy and population health surveillance. Data and trends of population health are critical to formulate public health policies and programs.

Public health also emphasizes on environmental health and its key components such as water and sanitation. Its chief focus lies with monitoring and regulating the physical environmental conditions to safeguard health and well-being of masses.

Environmental hygiene includes clean surroundings, food hygiene, washing and cooking food & water source protection.

Key Elements in Public Health:

Following are the key components of Public Health;

1. Surveillance of public health issues and trend analysis (monitoring, data collections and trend analysis)
2. Advocacy with governments to develop policies and plans (including prioritizing the WASH interventions)
3. Partnerships with communities, civil society and private sector to scale up the social marketing of the importance of public health
4. Research
5. Investments in water supply systems in communities and schools
6. Behavior change communication
7. Training and capacity building
8. Competent work force

Building upon this, research suggests that, any successful public health programs shall address these 6 areas,

- (1) Innovation to develop the evidence base for action;
- (2) a technical package of a limited number of high-priority, evidence-based interventions that together will have a major impact;
- (3) effective performance management, especially through rigorous, real-time monitoring, evaluation, and program improvement;
- (4) partnerships and coalitions with public- and private-sector organizations;
- (5) communication of accurate and timely information to the health care community, decision makers, and the public to effect behavior change and engage civil society; and
- (6) political commitment to obtain resources and support for effective action

Thomas R. Frieden, 2014, January. Six Components Necessary for Effective Public Health Program Implementation. American Public Health Association, Retrieved from
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/pmc3910052/>

In general, public health approach is highly important to create health awareness to prevent the diseases and recommend health policies and mass interventions based on its surveillance data and research analysis. It helps to implement vaccination programs and regulation of safety standards and practices, school nutrition programs and ensures access to clean water and air.

3. Public health is about partnership between the different players. 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

The World Health Organization's (WHO) definition of health systems encompasses all the organizations, institutions, and resources that are devoted to producing health actions (World Health Report of the year 2000). It, therefore determines the significant importance of partnership among all the actors/institutions to fortify the public health outcomes.

Role of International Nongovernmental Organizations (INGOs) have been central in supporting public health interventions around the world. A key principle of international humanitarian crisis response emphasizes the major role of national governments in coordination and strengthening of the local response capacity. INGOs comply with this principle and try to recruit local staff and build partnership with local institutions to go for participatory and joint response plan. Such kind of partnership and recruitment strategy is critical to enhance local response capacities (this includes funding to small initiatives at local level and participatory monitoring, planning and implementation).

INGOs interventions in developing countries generally include (especially during natural or manmade disasters);

- Rehabilitation and/or upgrading of existing water and sanitation facilities
- Enhancement of technical capacity (to monitor and improve the quality of services)
- Implementation of hygiene promotion activities (mostly in developing countries)

INGOs undertake these interventions in partnership of the relevant government institutions and recruiting and funding local community organizations. INGOs also support capacity building initiatives to strengthen local institutional and technical capacity as an effective exit strategy.

INGOs help the governments to assess the public health priorities in the wake of emergencies and support in resource mobilization through donors.

Developing countries have limited resources for public health programs. Poor infrastructure, lack of technical and financial capacities, poorly trained human resources and other similar constraints put the population at higher risks and failure of public health projects. INGOs help governmental institutions (as well as local NGOs) to overcome these issues and build capacities to better prioritize, plan and utilize the available resources. Informing, educating and empowering people through awareness raising, capacity building, behavior change, fund raising and taking ownership of the public health initiatives are some of the key factors determining success of any public health project. Since developing countries lack financial resources, community mobilization and partnership is one of the best preventive measure to any public health outbreak.

Case study of Pakistan

Notable growth in the public private partnership projects in health sector of Pakistan has been observed in recent decade. Number of health projects have been implemented by I/NGOs with greater success. NGOs have also complemented the efforts of government regarding monitoring of the projects activities (a weak area in government run programs and projects). Some of the successful examples of Public Private Partnership for health projects in Pakistan are; National Action Plan for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases and health promotion (in collaboration with Heartfile, a non-governmental think tank) and the Leprosy Control Program (in collaboration with the Marie-Adelaide Leprosy Society).

Research findings establish that Pakistan has benefitted substantially in the health sector through health education, health promotion, social marketing and advocacy by the not-for-profit private sector. 'Since many years, international and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have endeavored to fill the gaps in health service delivery, research and advocacy. NGOs have relatively performed better and achieved the results because of the flexible planning and the ability to design population based projects on health education, health promotion, social marketing, community development and advocacy'. (Iram Eijaz., Babar T Shaik., & Narjis Rizvi (2011, May). NGOs and government partnership for health systems strengthening: A qualitative study presenting viewpoints of government, NGOs and donors in Pakistan., BMC Health Services Research. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/pmc3112396/>).

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