Community radio stations promotion of WASH, Public Health and its key elements, the Roles of International Non-profit NGOs on Public Health.

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Abstract

The availability of water and good sanitation contributes significantly towards improving human lives and in the development of every country. This paper explores water, sanitation and hygiene, how the community radio stations can help to promote water, sanitation and hygiene with regards to audience and WASH messages, the understanding of public health and its key elements, how the role of international non- profit non- governmental organizations contribute to the success or failure of public health projects in the developing countries in terms of recruitment, training, funding and monitoring.

Keywords: Water, sanitation and hygiene, non- governmental organizations.

Community radio stations promotion of WASH, Public health and its elements, the roles of international non- governmental organizations in public health.

How can community radio stations address water, sanitation and hygiene?, public health and its elements and the roles of international non-governmental organizations in public health projects.

# What my community radio station would do to address water, sanitation and hygiene with regards to;

# Audience

Audience participation. The programs would be made with direct involvement of the community members through interviews, phones in programs or recordings of the outside events. This would make the community members to own the programs and give them a platform for airing out their concerns.

Local contents. The programs would be made using the local contents. This enhances the relevance of the programs as the community members would know every item in the programs and fully understand what the programs are all about. It also helps to address the cultural practices and behaviors that encourages unhealthy practices like in some culture women are not supposed to defecate in the toilets or latrines because they believe that they would not produce after.

Radio spots with traditional songs. To carry a message, radio spots would be made relying on traditional songs as well as a composition of sanitation messages. This would make the community members to feel valued since their culture is being considered and respected and makes them to own the programs.

Charitable work. The staffs of the community radio station would choose some days and move to the community to offer charitable works like cleaning the community water sources, market places and community health care units. This motivates the audience because they will see what the presenters always talking about being done practically and they will learn how to do them.

Donation. The station would give donations to the audience in terms of jerry cane, soaps, basins, chlorine tablets. These donations are made to mainly the disadvantaged like elders, orphans, sick people, physically handicap. This would help to promote sanitation and hygiene in the households.

Prizes. The station would give prizes like soaps, jerry cane, mosquito nets, and basins to the listeners during water, sanitation and hygiene programs. This motivates the audience to keep following the programs because would have hope of being lucky one day and taking the prize.

Interviews. The radio station would conduct interviews with the local community to find out their idea about WASH programs and to find what should be done to promote WASH programs and messages. This makes the community to own the programs and solution strategies. This makes finding of the solutions easier since the solutions are going to be given by the affected people. The critical topics, ideas and findings are aired out for the general community to get the views of their fellow community members.

1. **WASH messages.**

Soaps operas and serial dramas. Good serial dramas and soap operas concerning WASH can make considerable impact. The main benefit of soap operas is that they allow repetition of the educational messages. The station would make soap operas and serial dramas channeling WASH messages and repeating it several times. This makes the community to be reminded of the good WASH practices.

Infomercials. Infomercials are two minutes animations that dramatizes an issue and show the audience a solution sequence. Infomercials about WASH are programmed and run to keep reminding the audience about issues like hand washing, avoidance of open defecation and these animations are repeated.

Break-bumpers. Break-bumpers are five second messages that promote core behavioral changes, for example, “Did you wash your hands today” this keeps the audience reminded to do it if one have not done it yet.

Sound bites. Sound bites are conclusive statements one make after a presentation. When talking about WASH on a radio sound bites like “Hands washing with soap is estimated to reduce the risk of contracting diarrheal diseases by 42-47%. This makes the audience to find see the relevance of the information being communicated and give them the picture of the benefit of the programs.

Public service announcements. The station would make announcements about public service provisions like distribution of mosquito nets, spraying houses with insecticide that will make the local to be aware of the programs of WASH. This makes them to participate and make them to cooperate because they will know about the programs and not being ambushed.

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

Public health is the science and art of preventing diseases, prolonging life and promoting health through organized efforts and informed choices of society, public organizations, private communities and individuals. It is the science and art of protecting the safety and improving the health of communities through education, policy making and research for diseases and injury prevention. It is concern with the health of the whole population and prevention of diseases from which it suffers. Also it is a combination of sciences, skills and beliefs that is directed to the maintenance and improvement of the health of all the people through collective social actions.

Public health have the following key elements;

* Monitoring the health status of a community to identify potential problems.
* Diagnosing and investigating health problems and hazards in the community.
* Informing, educating and empowering people about health issues particularly the underserved and those at risk.
* Mobilizing community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.
* Developing policies and plans that support individuals and community health efforts.
* Enforcing laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.
* Linking people to needed personal health services and ensure provision of health care when needed.
* Ensuring a competent public health and personal health care work force.
* Evaluating effectiveness, accessibility and quality of personal and population-based health services.
* Researching new insights and innovation solutions to health problems.
* Promoting healthy behavior among the population.
* Protecting the environment, work place, food and water.

### Public health is about partnership between different players. Explain how the role international non-profit non-governmental organizations contribute to the success or failure of public health projects in the developing countries in terms of;

1. Recruitment.

Most of the international non-governmental organizations recruits expertise citizens of the country they are operating in. by recruiting experts it means people of informed ideas about the projects and know what to be done using the best laid down approaches to undertake the projects using the available resources which has led to the success of those projects.

By employing the nationals it helps to promote sustainability and ownership of the projects since the affected people are also involved in the project planning and execution. Also the recruited nationals can easily engaged fellow nationals to find out the best approaches for public health since they would be knowing the communities and also understands their languages making communication easy which has led to the success of the projects.

They are also gender sensitive in their recruitments, they have brought women in the team for running the projects. Women are the most affected group in the community in all aspects of life by bringing them on board helps a lot in finding out what affects them, best approaches on how to help them and involve them in the decision making. This has led to the success of many public health projects.

In their recruitment, they also include minority groups and disadvantaged people like the sick, physically disabled and geographically isolated people. This has made them to get involved in the projects through their representatives who air out the views of the people they represent. This has contributed to the success of those projects.

1. **Training.**

The international non-governmental organizations offers a number of training and capacity building for local governments, service providers, in-country civil society groups, communities and households. They have conducted training programs like community education, awareness raising, sanitation and hygiene promotion and marketing including stimulating demands, gender sensitive approaches, supply chain strengthening and implementing behavior change programs.

The local governments are trained about the need for public health and best approaches for public health, this helps to direct them during their planning and resource allocations towards the health sector.

They also organize training for communities about the basic health behavior they should undertake for them to reduce on diseases that can be contracted as a result of unhealthy behaviors like not washing hands with soap before and after eating, not washing hands after visiting toilets.

They also organize training for local non-governmental organizations and service providers on the best approaches they should undertake for the success of the projects they are undertaking.

During the training, they share their experiences in designing, planning, implementing and evaluating public health approaches through their teams of expertise which has contributed to the success of the projects.

1. **Funding.**

The international non-governmental organizations have provided funding to the local governments, service providers, in-country society groups, communities and households which has been used to construct safe water points, rehabilitation of safe water points, construction of improved latrines, creating sanitation and hygiene awareness and promotional services, facilitating research works and payment of workers. This has led to improved access to WASH services, changes in sanitation and hygiene practices, less time spent on water collection.

Their money is also helping in the day to day running of public health projects and maintenance of the projects which has contributed to the success of the projects.

1. **Monitoring.**

The international non-governmental organizations monitors all the projects they are involved. In the monitoring, they evaluate the projects in terms of challenges, utilization of resources, methods being used, types and quality of human resource running the projects, the progress of the projects and audit how the finance is being spent. This help to find solutions to the challenges being encountered, find better approaches for the projects hence keeping the projects in check always so that they achieve the intended targets. This has contributed to the success of the projects.

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