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BANGKOK

INTEGRATION OF COMMUNICATION IN PHC

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## INTEGRATION OF COMMUNICATION IN PHC

Communication is probably one of the weakest components of the overall PHC strategy. The group felt that communication is essential at all level of PHC.

### Problems

- Different interpretation and perception of the concept of PHC at all levels.
- Lack of coordination between these agencies.
- Operational objectives for inter-ministerial guidelines are not clear + common objectives are lacking.
- Lack of appreciation among the implementers with tendency to project own value rather than community's value.
- Lack of communication experts.
- Implementers lacking communication skills.
- Diversified interest and perception of needs among the beneficiaries.
- Behaviour change not usually sustained.
- Information reaching the top planners and policy makers is inadequate.

### Strategies

- Communication at the policy/planning level need to be improved - among the planners and agencies involved.
- Overall objective and goal should be defined in language understood by the various agencies.

- Facilitate mechanism for reaching out resources in various sectors.
- Involvement of communication experts in planning and the overall program.
- Selection of appropriate communication media.
- Integrate monitoring system from ministries downward to village level.
- Specific training program in communication needs to be developed.
- Communication strategy or mechanism to sustain behavioural change eg. 2-way feedback system to support the performance of field workers - reinforcement and recognition of the "good work".
- Recognition of local or village level communication system
  - identifying various strata in the community
  - community leaders
  - different change agents

HUMAN RESOURCES AND TRAINING NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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### Human Resource and training Needs and Recommendations

In the context of this workshop the group considered the human resources (manpower) and training requirements for service delivery of nutrition in primary health care. This assumes that program objectives are to improve nutrition and health status of the target or client population through positive behavior change.

The group first assessed the human resources or manpower issue by identifying the "Actors" or change agents as follows:

- A. Family level - the mother or other family member who "services" or feeds the client (0-6 year old child, pregnant or lactating mother)
- B. Village level - the person who has contact with or "changes" the mother or family level change agent. (volunteer, fieldworker from govt., NGO person or traditional health worker)
  - political, religious and other leaders who can affect behavior at village or community level.
- C. Sub-district, municipal, district and provincial level health workers, agricultural extension workers, community development and other change agents.
  - political leaders , planning officials and administrators.

This network of Change agents quickly expands and becomes very large as programs become national in scope. This creates a large training burden for this group alone and also necessitates the creation of a system to service the training needs itself. Because resources are always more limited than needs the group discussed and has prepared recommendations as outlined below.

A. training strategies need to be developed to maximize benefit for cost. This can be done by:

- 1) standardizing training packages using a "vertical" approach in which "change agents" from top to bottom are taught the same things (with learning or behavior objectives developed from the bottom first). Agencies should examine their training system to look carefully if a "serial" or a "telescopic" system would be more efficient and reduce message distortion as training proceeds from top to bottom. However, it is important to teach fieldworkers to be creative and innovative in developing locally adopted materials which can enhance learning.
- 2) nutrition messages and training can be more efficiently accomplished if piggybacked upon other successful training programs. Modular formats and materials will greatly facilitate this effort and reduce training time. The modules can be used to focus training on one issue at a time and are excellent for in-service training.

- B. Training can be more effective and efficient if the participative or job/task oriented method is utilized. Constraints to this method should be analyzed and attempts made to remove each. This emphasis on inter-personal or communication skills should also be emphasized for the client or receiver of services such as the mother or village worker. In this manner an effective feedback mechanism is enhanced.
- C. Monitoring and evaluation of the training process itself is needed. This includes evaluating the trainees prior to and immediately after training as well as after several months on the job. This monitoring should also include the inputs, materials and process of the training including feedback from the trainees themselves.
- D. The planning and design of training require a significant level of skill. Care must be taken by governments to develop and train a cadre of persons capable of establishing, monitoring and supervising a vast training network. Inventories of such capabilities and plans for development of this infra-structure may need precedence over the actual training itself. This is analogous to a computer factory. Even though it is the computer which does the work, the factory to build the computers must be built first.

The above comments are with regard to the training for behavior change generally. The group also recommends that training in communication

skills and up-grading of training by the use of more effective methods also be given priority. Pre and post testing of training materials and curriculum should be more rigorous and timely. This can be done by a thorough inventory of resources available. We should not overlook the potential to be found in:

- A. The non-governmental sector-such as advertising agencies, consultants, etc.
- B. Other sector experience-such as family planning, community development or agriculture.

The group recommends that this workshop be followed-up with another with more geographical and problem specific focus. We found the sharing of experience and materials very useful and stimulating.



INFORMATION NETWORK NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Mrs. Jalaja Sundaram
2. Mr. Nenda Man Sthapit
3. Mrs. Manel Abhayaratna
4. Ms. Pattanee Winichagoon
5. Mrs. Pongpit Dulyapach
6. Mr. Panich Pugcharoen
7. Ms. Jean E. Andersen

## Information Network Needs and Recommendations

The group consisted of the representatives from the following countries:

Thailand

Malaysia

Nepal

India

Sri Lanka

The committee agreed that there is a need for an information network and system and recommended the following for consideration.

1. There should be a coordination committee at the policy/national level wherever there is none.
2. Wherever this policy level committee exists, it should be made functional and activated and have non-governmental agencies included in this committee.
  - a. To make the person in charge of nutrition at the National level to be the member secretary to make the above committee function effectively.
  - b. To make use of mass media such as: radio, TV, video tape to take the information to this coordination committee.
  - c. To make use of the research studies.
3. The information should flow from the bottom to the policy level also.

4. The information to field worker needs to be
  - a. Simple
  - b. One at a time
  - c. Attractive in the form appreciated, as drama, etc.
  - d. Have a component of incentive
  - e. Repeated

5. There should be an exchange of views among the countries for which, perhaps international agency, like UNICEF can circulate a newsletter as to the projects taken up in the neighboring countries. This would help in formulating information pattern.

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RESEARCH NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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2. Dr. Kamaluddin Ahmad
3. Dr. Khursheed Jahan
4. Dr. Aree Valyasevi
5. Dr. Najma Rizvi
6. Mr. Ruslan Adji
7. Mr. Adisak Satham
8. Ms. Jean E. Andersen
9. Dr. Joan D. Gussow
10. Dr. Paul Whitmore

## RESEARCH NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### I Research Areas and Recommendations

- 1) Exploring models for expanding pilot projects to a larger scale.
- 2) Analysis of workload and tasks demanded/expected of volunteer health workers as a basis for appropriate task assignment.
- 3) Generating models for planning on a sufficiently comprehensive scale to identify underlying causes for immediate nutritional problems.
- 4) Investigating at which ages under which circumstances solid foods should be introduced.
- 5) Study of "Positive Deviants" in rural communities eg.
  - How do they differ from the 'average' families?
  - What maintains their beneficial behaviours?As a source of appropriate message design.
- 6) Task analysis of time and resource constraints affecting family members to ensure that messages requiring new activities are realistic.
- 7) Research into which format/medium is most effective for which type of objective.
- 8) Explore methods for achieving systematic data collection and timely feedback of field data into the decision making and planning process.

- 9) Investigate mothers understanding of use and purpose of growth charts.
- 10) Assess impact of growth charts on mother's knowledge of normal child growth, etc.
- 11) Assess impact of custody of growth chart on Nutrition Status.
- 12) Identifying more appropriate indicators of success in order to improve the process evaluation.
- 13) Combining techniques derived from a variety of disciplines to develop new approaches.

## II Identified Obstacles to Communications Research

- 1) Insufficient political support
- 2) Lack of understanding of the usefulness and importance of research in solving and identifying nutrition problems.
- 3) Insufficient trained research manpower.
- 4) Insufficient technical and personnel support available for rapid analysis of data.
- 5) Insufficient cost-effectiveness analysis done.
- 6) Not much emphasis on small scale evaluation of research
- 7) Not much immediate practical application.

### III Recommendations

1 The group agreed that the research areas listed are needed. The priority should be set up according to the needs and situation of each country.

2 The obstacles identified need to be overcome and the mechanism should be considered for each country.

3 The group agreed on the needs to increase resources to facilitate research in communications such as manpower development, funding sources, needs for more coordination and exchange of knowledge and experiences: workshop, seminar, exchange programs, expert consultation, etc.



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