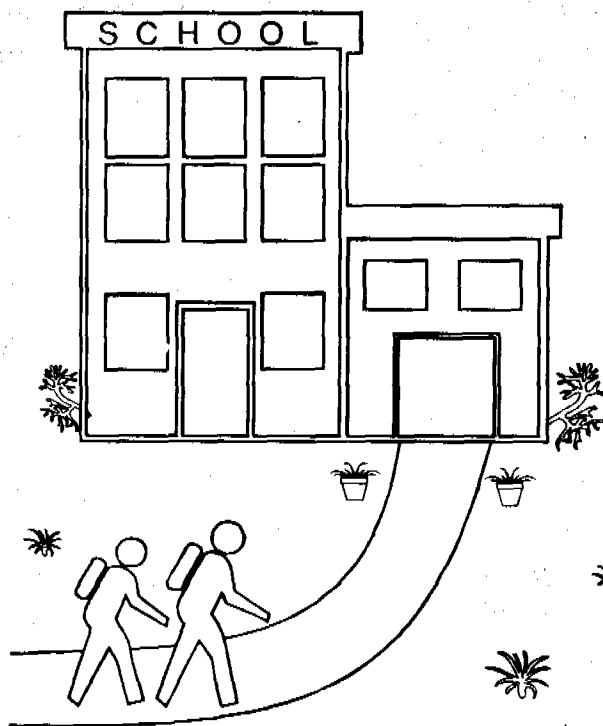


**Teachers' Training in  
Environmental Sanitation and Community Health  
under ODA-British Council  
Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project**

**Unit 1**



**SCHOOLS  
AS  
COMMUNITY  
HEALTH  
PROMOTERS**



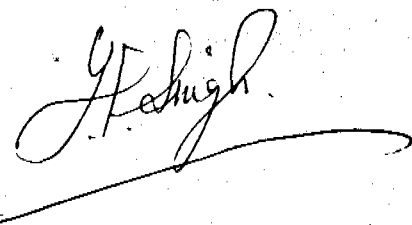
**Sulabh International Institute of Rural Development,  
Research and Training, New Delhi**

## PREFACE

People's participation is the key to the success of any community health programme. This is simply because it is a programme which is of the people, by the people and for the people. So, unless this programme is run in a participatory manner, it won't succeed since it would be akin to cutting a man to suit the coat. Thus, no community programme, whether a health-programme or some other agenda, can be pushed down the throat of the people without their consent. In fact, no programme could be a success without the consensus of the target audience, i.e. the masses.

Secondly, you need an appropriate forum or platform to launch a community health campaign. And, schools provide the best launching pad for initiating such community ventures since they encompass the entire spectrum of the community "directly or indirectly" through the students. Hence, schools could act as promoters of community health in more ways than one. The teachers are the first and foremost link in this communication-chain who would create awareness amongst the students, involving them as active participants in the wholistic project of community-awareness towards health and hygiene.

So, the primary focus is on training or educating the teachers regarding the different aspects of community health, hygiene and sanitation. Thus, in order to involve the community in the noble task of environmental sanitation, it is a must to make the teachers aware of their role as motivators or promoters of community health. Such a batch of teachers or motivators must be well-versed with the varying elements of community participation, personal hygiene and family health as well as the ability to organise health campaigns and exhibitions. In a nutshell, school is the nucleus for commencing a package of activities which would ultimately culminate, sooner or later, in a healthy community which is both - environmentally conscious and ecologically sound.



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# Chapter 1

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION

Though various measures on health, hygiene and sanitation are taken up by the government and other agencies, it will not have satisfactory achievements without people's participation. Creating awareness amongst them, involving them actively and keeping them as active partners in various stages of planning, execution and monitoring of the programme will be a matter of paramount importance. It has to be done in the following stages.

### **To identify lead persons in the community**

In every village, there are persons of various different categories who exert influence on their co-villagers and people seek their advice on personal or community problems. They are formal or informal leaders, sarpanchs, school teachers, retired government servants, influential businessmen, religious heads, social workers, mahila mandal members, persons working in Government jobs for that village, local public representatives, etc.

This could be done by taking interviews of different cross-sections of the society and a committee should be formed consisting of such persons to form a "Vikas Samitee" (or Development Committee) who would jointly work for the betterment of the village.

### **Fixation of responsibility**

It would be very useful to form sub-committees on different topics like health, sanitation, literacy etc., so that they concentrate their energies in their own, respective, sphere of activities.

### **Orientation of Community Leaders**

Orientation and training workshops should be arranged for creating awareness among them regarding various measures. They should include:

**Health components - medical check-up, immunization, family deficiency diseases, ante-natal care, prevention and cure of communicable diseases.**

- **Hygiene and sanitation - Disposal of solid and liquid waste, drains, toilets, soakage pit, compost pit, etc.**
- **Safe drinking water**
- **Food, Nutrition and Safe food**
- **Literacy drive**
- **Developing self-sustained employment schemes.**

## Role of Community Leaders

Community leaders should discuss and work out amongst them for :

1. The available resources and mobilising resources from various agencies
2. Interaction and co-ordination with different general units to utilise maximum benefits from the already existing units like health centres, schools, cooperatives, animal husbandry units, sanitary units, etc.
3. Contacting various Government agencies who assist in functioning and offer help to execute welfare programmes.
4. Surveying the existing status of village and adopt measures to cover the needs of the community.
5. Making a drive by organising different mass media devices, camps, exhibitions, cultural shows, folk songs, melas (exhibitions), etc., to popularise this programme.

Friendly relations and better support are required, it creates confidence in them.

Place various needs of the people before them and take their help in organising health education and orientation camps. They can also be meaningfully involved in programme-planning, monitoring and evaluation of the village projects.

## Encouraging Villagers To Participate In Activities/Projects

What is needed for effective community participation is that villagers must be involved in all stages of project work. This, in practical terms, will mean the following steps:

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*When we do a needs-assessment in an area we let people identify their own problems and needs, and say what is most important to them.*

*people identify their own problems/needs*

**In doing a survey to assess needs, we can involve local people who are interested, to help us carry out this task. They already know the community.**

*assist in collecting information*

**Letting people suggest solutions to their own experience and knowledge**

*suggest solutions*

**Letting people say what their most important problem is.**

*set priorities*

**When making a project plan, get community people sitting together to take decisions and make concrete plans about what needs to be done, what steps have to be taken and how.**

*take decisions and make plans*

**Community participation means that people will assist in finding local resources**

to support the projects/activities they wish to undertake. This could be in terms of meeting some of the costs of a project/activity, or contributing labour, or materials (e.g. for construction of a school-roof) to get the job done.

Also local people can assist the field worker in obtaining information about other types of resources and services that are available from Government agencies and other organisations. The field worker can encourage and guide people about where to go for this information and whom to talk to.

Community people should be encouraged to take a larger share of the responsibilities for carrying out the project. When drawing up a work plan, be sure to allocate responsibilities to villagers according to their skills and abilities.

Villagers will participate in discussing and determining whether or not the project was beneficial, and what could be done to improve it further. A few experienced people in the community can also help the field worker to supervise and oversee certain projects.

*find resources  
locally and  
outside*

*take responsibility tasks*

*assist in supervision  
and evaluation*

---

*(There are, of course, other practical ways by which community people can participate. These vary from project to project, place to place, and people you will be working with. The field worker needs to think what these are.)*

**-MANUAL FOR "FIELD WORKERS" BY UNICEF/UNFPA, NEPAL**



# Chapter 2

## MOTIVATIONAL ROLE OF TEACHERS FOR A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY

(The following lecture is a part of an environment model for schools presented by our previous Environment Minister - Smt. Maneka Gandhi.)

### On Teacher's Role

Teachers play a very significant role in moulding and motivating the minds of children.

I would like teachers to do all that is possible to sensitize children to adopt an environmentally conscious life style. Because positive attitudes, based on individual responsibility, developed in children will go a long way in ensuring the future of our society. Protection of the environment and conservation of our natural resources are so important that they cannot be left to governmental action alone.

### On Garbage

Garbage is a great environmental hazard.

What can we do with such garbage?

#### The principles :

- *Do not burn*
- *Do not litter*
- *Maintain a compost pit*

#### **Don't burn it, because:**

- *It contains material that can be recycled such as paper, metal and glass.*
- *It contains organic matter such as leaves which can enrich soil-fertility.*
- *Burning garbage causes pollution.*

#### **Maintain a Compost pit :**

- *At a convenient location in or around the school campus, make a compost pit into which all refuse made of organic matter can be dumped.*
- *Fallen leaves, wasted food and other organic matter can be put into the pit with thin layers of soil and occasional sprinkling of water to help decomposition.*
- *The compost is better than chemical fertilizers and can be used in the school garden.*
- *Make cleaning of the premises a weekly assignment to each class.*
- *Let a class of 40 to 50 students be made responsible for campus maintenance everyday, by rotation. Consider using one or two of the periods for SUPW (Socially Useful Productive Work) each day for this purpose, with your active participation.*

## **On Greening The Schools**

- *Grow a garden and plant trees*
- *Maintain a school nursery*

### **Grow a garden and plant trees**

- *Schools should be made models of good ecological practices. There is much to be learned about nature by watching plants grow and observing animal-life.*
- *Make your campus-greening a part of the school's educational programme. Allocate portions of the campus to different classes and encourage a healthy competition among them. Trees automatically attract insects, birds small mammals and other animals and the campus will soon become a mini-ecosystem-an environmental asset and a natural teaching/learning laboratory.*
- *Schools that have a limited space, but tall walls, could cover the walls with creepers.*

### **Maintain a school nursery**

- *At a convenient corner of your school campus, you could establish a nursery to provide you the plants and saplings required for your tree plantation activities.*
- *Contact the local forest department, social forestry official horticulture departments and local nurseries for additional seeds, saplings and advice.*

## **On Other activities for environment**

You can undertake the following activities for environmental conservation:

- *adopt a park*
- *adopt a road-divider*
- *save electricity*
- *save water*
- *save paper*
- *reduce the use of biodegradable items*
- *reduce vehicular pollution*
- *avoid smoking*
- *grow a terrace/balcony garden*
- *use window boxes for flowering plants*

### **Adopt a park**

Adopt a nearby park or a garden for improvement by your plantation activities and for proper maintenance. Get in touch with the city/municipal authorities responsible for the park, through your school Principal for obtaining the necessary permission for doing so. make a success of the adopted park, for other schools to emulate.



If these infections are not treated in time a person can become blind. The eye can be injured by pieces of stone or glass flying into the eye, or by children throwing dust or stones at each other, or while playing with sharp objects like bow and arrows.

Another way in which the eye can be damaged is by the lack of vitamin A in the diet. If this is not treated in time it can lead to blindness.

Eyesight can also be spoiled by reading in bad light, or in wrong postures, or reading books with very small print.

### **Points for health Education:**

- *Wash your face and eyes well every morning when you get up.*
- *Do not use each other's handkerchiefs or towels, especially if one of you has an eye infection.*
- *Do not use each other's stick for applying kajal or surma. Or better, do not apply kajal or surma in your eyes at all as they attract dust and smoke.*
- *Do not let flies sit on your face and eyelids or on the face and eyelids of your younger brothers and sisters.*
- *Do not throw dust, stones or dirt at each other or aim at anyone with a stick or sharp pointed object.*
- *Eat plenty of dark green leafy vegetables like palak and methi, and yellow fruit vegetables like papaya or carrot.*
- *When you are reading or writing, use a good light. The light should come from your left.*

### **Care of the Ears**

- **Some people remove wax from their ears by poking hairpins or matchsticks into the ears. This is very dangerous and can lead to injury or infection of the ear.**
- **Insects sometimes crawl into the ear and block the ear passage or cause infection.**
- **Swimming in dirty water can also lead to ear infection.**
- **Hearing can be damaged by exposure to sudden or constant loud noises such as explosion, loud blaring music, machinery, or people's shouting.**

### **Points for Health Education**

- *When you have your bath, wash your ears well. Do not forget to wash behind the ears. Dry your ears well after bathing or swimming.*
- *Do not swim in dirty ponds.*
- *Never poke sticks or hairpins into your ears. If you feel that your ears are blocked, go to the doctor. He will remove any extra wax which may be inside the ear.*
- *Protect your ears from insects, especially if you sleep on the ground. Keep the ground and your bedding clean. If anything goes into your ear, go to the health worker or doctor.*

- ***Avoid exposure to loud noises. If necessary, put cotton-wool in your ears. Do not add to noise yourself by firing loud crackers, or shouting, or blowing noisy horns. Never shout or make loud noises in anyone's ear.***

## **Care of Teeth**

Healthy teeth are essential for proper nutrition. If teeth are not properly cared for, they will develop cavities or infection. This will result in toothache and inability to chew the food. If the food is swallowed without being properly chewed, it is more difficult to digest.

Infection in the teeth can lead to general ill health.

After a meal and especially after eating sticky sweets, food particles remain in between the teeth. If they are not removed, these food particles decay and produce substances which destroy the outer covering or enamel of the teeth. It is therefore important to remove remaining food particles at the end of a meal. This can be done by chewing fibrous vegetables or fruits like carrot or apple, or by brushing the teeth and rinsing the mouth after the meal. Using pins or other pointed objects to pick the teeth can injure the gums and cause infection.

## **Points for Health Education**

Brush the inside and outside of your teeth and rinse your mouth with clean water. Do this every morning and night and after each meal. Use a soft toothbrush or a soft twig (datun) of neem, babul, jamun, tamarind or banyan tree to brush the teeth. Instead of toothpaste, you can make your own toothpowder at home from a mixture of finely powdered salt and charcoal, or a mixture of well-pounded salt and charred paddy husks. Do not use any fruity material to clean your teeth.

- ***Do not pick your teeth with pins or other pointed objects.***
- ***Do not eat too many sugar, or sticky sweets. After eating any sweets, always rinse your mouth well.***
- ***At the end of your meal, chew a piece of carrot, apple, pear or coconut.***
- ***Do not crack nuts or other hard objects with your teeth. A broken tooth cannot be replaced.***
- ***If you have a toothache, go to the doctor and have the tooth attended to. If a bad tooth is neglected, it will get rotten and fall out or will have to be pulled out.***

## **Care of Nose and Throat**

Many people have the habit of picking their noses, or blowing their noses and spitting anywhere on the ground. These habits are unsightly, unhygienic, and make the surroundings dirty. They also spread infections of the nose and throat and diseases like tuberculosis.

Coughing or sneezing on to other people is also dangerous. Germs from a sick person can be blown on to a healthy person, can enter his body, and make him ill. Diseases like tuberculosis, coughs and colds, diphtheria and whooping cough can be spread in this way.

Breathing deeply through the nose fills the lungs with filtered air and keeps them healthy. If a person breathes through the mouth, the air is not filtered and much of it goes into the stomach instead of the lungs.

Shouting and talking loudly can strain the throat and cause hoarseness or even temporary loss of the voice.

### **Points for Health Education**

- *Do not blow your nose or spit anywhere on the ground or wall. Clear your nose or throat at the nearest tap or washing place. If that is not possible, use a handkerchief or clean soft rag such as an old sari. This can later be washed or burned.*
- *Do not cough or sneeze on to other people. Turn your head away and cover your mouth with your hand or with a handkerchief or a clean rag.*
- *Do not pick your nose.*
- *Every morning, practice breathing deeply through your nose with your mouth closed. Do this in front of an open window or outside in the open air.*
- *Learn to speak softly. Do not shout or speak at the top of your voice.*

### **Care of Skin, Nails and Hair**

During the day we gather a lot of dust and sweat on our bodies, especially in the hot dusty months of the year. If this is not removed by frequent bathing, the skin can harbour germs. This leads to boils, sores, ringworms, or infestation with scabies or body lice. Also, a dirty sweaty skin gives off an unpleasant smell.

The hair must also be washed and combed regularly to keep it clean and free from lice. Schoolchildren, particularly girls with long hair, are likely to get head-lice from their companions.

Long dirty nails are not only ugly to look at but are also unhygienic. If the hands are not properly washed after going to the toilet, the nails can harbour germs or threadworm eggs. When such a person handles food, the germs or worm-eggs pass into the food and can infect those who eat the food.

Dirty clothes can harbour insects like bugs, lice or flies, or germs which can cause skin infections. They also cause bad smell.

Clothes should be clean and comfortable and should protect one from heat and cold.

Walking barefoot in places which are used for defecation can lead to hookworm and can be prevented by using footwear. Footwear can also protect one from thorns and snakebite or scorpion sting. Shoes which are too loose or too tight, or which are worn out are uncomfortable to wear and can deform the feet. Shoe-bite and wounds from protruding nails in the shoe can be dangerous as they can lead to tetanus.

### **Points for Health Education**

- *Take a bath every day. Use soap and water or a soft paste made from a small amount of gram flour mixed with a little water. Scrub the body, especially the back and feet, with a brush, or a rough cloth, or a dried gourd. Take care to wash the folds in the armpit and groin.*
- *Wash the hair at least once a week and more often during the hot weather, comb*

**it regularly. If it is long, plait it neatly and tie the ends with a ribbon or a strip of cloth.**

- **Every evening after school, comb the hair with a fine-toothed comb to look for lice and nits (eggs). If there are lice in the hair, take the necessary treatment before the number of lice increases.**
- **Keep your fingernails and toenails short and clean. Cut your fingernails once a week. If you work in the garden or field, scrub your nails with a brush to take out the dirt.**
- **Wash your hands well with soap and water after you go to the toilet and before taking food.**
- **Always wear clean clothes. Wash your clothes frequently especially in summers. If you have to wear the same clothes on the next day, expose them to air or keep them in the hot sun. Clothes worn next to the skin (under clothes) should be washed every day.**
- **Wear light and loose clothes. These should be cool in summers (e.g. cotton garments) and warm in winters (e.g. woollen or padded garments).**



# Chapter 4

## ELEMENTS OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

**Community participation** is a very fashionable phrase. It often appears in documents from international agencies such as WHO and UNICEF. But, it is a term that is not understood very well. Some persons feel that it is given too much emphasis and that it is the "mythology of the decade". Although everyone talks about it, community participation is often not put into practice.

What is community participation? What does the word "community" really mean and what do we mean by community becoming involved and participating in the improvement of health?

The word **community** can be used to describe :

1. *a locality or small geographical area;*
2. *a group of people sharing same interests or*
3. *a network of relationship at a local level.*

So, "community" means more than just people who live close together, it refers to sharing and working together in some way.

The word **community-participation** is used to cover a whole range of very different actions. At one extreme, there are actions which are really forms of manipulation where people are controlled like puppets, though there is a pretence of letting them make decisions. At the opposite extreme, there is total participation or complete control of their affairs by the community.

Community participation means the involvement of communities in decisions about their own future. The accent of health education is on individuals - e.g., when advice is given at a clinic or when home visits are made. In community participation programmes, the emphasis is not on just the individuals but the **Whole Community**.

Health workers can not know as much about a community as the people who live there themselves. It makes sense to involve communities in making plans because they know local conditions and the possibilities for changes. A common approach is to try and involve the community in helping to carry out initial surveys so that you can draw on their detailed local knowledge.

### **Benefits of Community Participation**

If the communities have been involved in choosing priorities and deciding on plans, they are much more likely to become involved in the programme. Community participation leads to greater involvement and motivation by the people because they see the programme to be meeting THEIR needs.

Health education is often aimed at persuading people to take up services such as ante-natal, child health, etc. The reasons for low-utilisation and uptake are often because the services are poorly located, inaccessible, inconveniently timed and not perceived as relevant. If communities have been involved in making plans for their surroundings, they will be more willing to contribute money or labour to the schemes.

The enthusiasm that comes from community participation can lead to a greater sense of self-reliance for the future, e.g. - water is often a need that communities see. They are usually willing to participate in water programmes because they are sure of the benefits. The feeling of community -solidarity and self-reliance from participating in decisions over their own future through a water project can lead to further activities.

For ordinary people, the experience of participating in programmes builds up confidence that they can make decisions over their future. Communities learn problem-solving skills and self-reliance.

Community participation leads to a better relationship between the community and health workers. There is trust and a feeling of partnership.

## **Problems**

Some problems can arise in community participation programmes. Many people find this concept difficult to accept. They may see themselves as the experts and not recognize that the community should have a say in their own affairs.

Another problem is with the concept of needs. Planners and health workers have criticised, basing on community's felt needs, on the grounds that the community is not really able to define its own needs. But very often, what the health services and other external agencies think the community needs is quite different from what the community members themselves hold as felt-needs.

If we look at how people define their felt needs we see that they are based on their judgment of the present situation and possibilities for change. These judgments may depend on the beliefs about the extent and nature of health problems, their causes and possibilities for prevention and cure. These beliefs are influenced by their previous experience, education, understanding of epidemiology and biology. So felt needs may be based on a realistic assessment of their situation by the community. But they can also be based on misunderstandings and lack of critical knowledge.

Another problem with felt needs comes from the lack of flexibility of programmes to deal with what the community raises as needs. The communities do not usually separate their needs into administratively convenient topics like health, education, community development or employment. People may raise poor roads or lack of irrigation for their crops as their most important needs. Health may not even be mentioned.

Another problem comes with the concept of community itself. We often assume that everyone in a village or community agree with each other and share the same felt needs. This is not always the case. People may disagree with each other. Frequently, the needs that emerge from meetings are those of the dominant powerful groups. The needs of disadvantaged sections of the community such as the poor or women may be ignored. Social stratification and other forms of divisions can exist according to religion, language, tribe or caste. It is essential to understand the power structure and divisions in a community.

A community divided in its interests and felt needs and poorly organised to take advantage of available resources needs an external input to provide the stimulus for change. Many projects have failed because they did not recognise the need for field staff to act as community organisers or because such staff were not given the training to work with communities.

In primary health care, it is the health workers in health centres and clinics who are supposed

to carry out this community-organisation and work with communities to select and train village health workers and initiate community-action on health issues. Yet, most of them receive little training on methods for working with communities.

Another serious problem comes from the short time-scale of many projects. Effective community participation is a process that takes time to develop. Unfortunately, many health programmes are planned on a short time scale of two or three years. However, it is extremely difficult to develop genuine community participation in such a short time.

Community participation can bring considerable benefits but there are also many difficulties in the implementation of community participation strategies. But these difficulties can be overcome and effective community participation programmes be implemented with proper planning.

## **Planning for Community Participation**

It is important that everyone involved in implementing the programme meets and carefully considers the implications of a community participation strategy. They should be made aware of the advantages of letting their communities decide for themselves what their priorities should be.

It is important to involve persons from other departments such as agriculture, rural development and adult literacy, as the community may bring up needs that cannot be met by the health services. Since health, social and economic needs are all interrelated, it is important to work as a team.

If genuinely promoting community-participation, objectives will be determined by the community themselves. So keep the objectives open-ended and when setting objectives do not be too rigid on desired outcomes.

As the main point of community participation is to develop self-reliance, critical awareness and problem-solving skills in communities, this should be reflected in the objectives.

Community participation should be seen as a process over time. It cannot be achieved through occasional visits and holding meetings. Common stages in the community participation process are:

- *selection of area,*
- *entry,*
- *getting to know the community,*
- *initial action,*
- *building the organisation,*
- *further activities,*
- *withdrawal and end of formal project output.*

## **The Process**

Once the area is selected, the field worker identifies and makes contact with opinion leaders, field workers from Government and NGOs through meetings and informal contacts. Opinion leaders are individuals with special influence like religious leaders, teachers or elders. They can

be a great help in understanding the community.

Building up community participation involves not only meeting individuals to find out about problems of the area but also involves working with large groups. It is usual to have a community meeting early in the programme as it provides an opportunity for everybody to participate in the discussion.

Out of the large meeting, a small group is often formed, for example, a Village Water Committee. The community worker encourages them to select short term achievable objectives which will unite different factions in common action, but lets the community take the lead.

The success of this initial action results in individuals in the group gaining more confidence and attracting more members. The need for some structure becomes apparent and the community worker advises on the community structure, etc.

The community begins to develop trust and confidence in the community worker and will listen to suggestions for further action. The community worker continues dialogue with the community and sets up educational activities in response to the wishes of the community.

The perspective of the community is broadened and they are prepared to tackle wider issues. Individuals in the community begin to acquire a range of skills as a result of their involvement. The community worker advises on the organisation of the community and helps to resolve any internal tensions and conflicts. The community acts on further issues. The community worker begins to take a less active role and encourages the community to take more responsibility for maintaining the project.

The community worker collects data for final evaluation. The local community participates in the evaluation of the project.

The community worker leaves and the momentum of community activities continues or collapses depending on the strength of the community structure created during the community programme.

These steps should not be applied in a rigid way. They should be seen as overlapping components of a process of working with communities.

## **Building in Learning Experiences**

It is important to build learning experiences into community participation programmes. In this way, the community will be able to understand more about the different factors that influence their health and how these factors can be changed.

But the approach to teaching should be quite different from traditional health education. It is important to use methods which encourage the community to ask questions and develop a critical awareness of their situation. Participatory learning methods have the following characteristics:

- 1. Opportunities built-in for discussions, feedback and participation.**
- 2. Involves simulations, role plays and problem-solving exercises.**
- 3. Less emphasis on acquisition of specific knowledge and more on development of problem-solving skills, critical thinking, reflection and analysis.**
- 4. Uses small groups (less than 20)**



5. *Open-ended with objectives determined by the whole group.*
6. *Trainer acts as facilitator to process, rather than teacher and "expert".*

## **Community Health Worker**

In primary health programmes, it is common to encourage communities to select among themselves to receive a simple training as village health worker. They are able to be highly effective communicators because they share the same background characteristics as their fellow villagers. Their effectiveness depends a great deal on the degree of community involvement in their selection, their training and the degree of support received by the programme.

However, there is also the need for skilled field workers to provide support for lay workers and facilitate the process of community participation. The training of field workers should enable them to:

1. *understand community structures*
2. *identify opinion leaders*
3. *be good listeners and communicators*
4. *work with individuals and groups*
5. *advise on community organisations*
6. *use participatory learning methods*

While it is helpful to have full-time community workers, community participation should not be seen as something that can only be done when a programme has full time community workers on its staff. Health workers should be trained to incorporate community organisation activities within their normal activities.

## **Evaluation**

Community participation programmes require special approaches to evaluation. Community involvement should not be restricted only to planning and implementation. If you take participation seriously, the community should be involved in the evaluation of the programme as well. Evaluation itself becomes a learning experience in which everybody looks at what has been achieved and decides what more needs to be done.

**Following is a checklist of questions for finding the degree of participation in a programme:**

1. *Is the community involved in planning-management and control of the health programme at the community level? Were the felt needs of the community found out at the outset of the programme and was notice taken of them in planning the programme objectives?*
2. *What forms of social organisations exist in the community and to what extent have they been involved in the decision-making process : e.g.-Farmers' cooperatives, clubs, churches, political organisations, trade unions, etc.?*
3. *Is there a mechanism for dialogue between health system personnel and community leadership?*
4. *Is there a mechanism for community representatives to be involved in decision-*

*making at higher levels and is this effective?*

5. *Is there any evidence of the external agents changing their plans as a result of criticism from the community?*
6. *Are deprived groups (e.g. poor, landless, unemployed, women) adequately represented in the decision-making process?*
7. *Are local resources used, e.g.-labour, buildings, money?*
8. *Was the community involved in the evaluation of the project and drafting of the final report?*

## **Conclusion**

The most important resource for the promotion of health are the people themselves. Through community participation, you can utilize this rich resource to improve the health of the people.



## ORGANISING HEALTH CAMPAIGNS & EXHIBITIONS

Health, especially Environmental Health, is such an educational issue that it has to be constantly propagated through the medium of campaigns and exhibitions to make the masses aware of its importance in leading a healthy life.

Campaigns are also necessary to explode the prevailing myths on vital health issues and educate the common people by imparting the true facts pertaining to the various nuances of environmental health.

Exhibition, in fact, is a sub-set of the larger set that is the campaign. Health exhibitions are an inherent component of any health campaign, without which the campaign is incomplete. Health campaign, or any educational campaign for that matter, is initiated with the basic purpose of promoting a central or core message such as "the use of appropriate latrines for a pollution-free hygienic and healthy environment".

The campaign is organised for a certain fixed duration, say one year or two, during which the central message is propagated through various means to the target audience. The constant hammering of the message creates a more congenial environment for easy assimilation of the message. In Marshall Mc. Luhan's words: "**Medium is the message**". Hence, the form is as important as the content.

If the 'packaging' is not good enough or not attractive then there will not be any takers or the message simply will not 'sell'.

The following points must be borne in mind in order to run a successful campaign :

- *It is vital to know the major problem or the main need of the target group in order to decide the focus of the campaign.*
- *The problem should be a common need of the maximum number of the target group.*
- *Provide such an appropriate solution of the health problem which would be accepted by the entire target group or community.*

### Optimum Action Plan

It certainly takes time to prepare a proper plan of action for a successful campaign, but it not only facilitates its implementation but also spells success for the health campaign. It is a must to involve the local community leaders in formulating such an action-plan.

The following points must be taken into consideration while formulating the plan of action:

- **Analysing the situation**

One must know the exact state-of-arts pertaining to all the aspects of the health message which one wants to promote. The accuracy of information regarding the current health situation is the pivot on which the whole campaign revolves. This also means interacting with the community and gather on-site data connected with the campaign per se.

- **Selecting the plan-of-action**

The first and foremost step for initiating the campaign is the selection of an appropriate plan-of-action to promote the campaign. As a matter of fact, in a health campaign, the emphasis is more on the plan-of-action than teaching the health principles. It is this action-plan which provides solutions or answers to the community problems or needs.

- **Defining the objectives**

Once you decide the action-plan for the health campaign then it becomes essential to define and state the objectives clearly and specifically. You should also be crystal clear regarding what kind of change is expected and who will bring about this change.

- **Planning the Evaluation Methodology**

Evaluation of any campaign is a perennial or constant process. Still, evaluation process commences once the campaign is over. It helps us back-check how the campaign fared and how it could be made better in the future.

- **Involving concerned people in the campaign**

A methodology has to be decided for completely involving the concerned people into the campaign. These people are committed from the beginning to the end of the campaign, that means from the planning stage, to the progress of the campaign and even uptill its evaluation.

- **Planning the forthcoming events**

All the forthcoming events should be planned in advance even before launching the campaign. The following points must be taken into account while planning the campaign:

- *The plan-of-action should bear all the details and the planning should be specific.*
- *Prepare the list of activities and a work-chart to carry out the campaign in an organised manner.*
- *Ascertain the community of the awareness programme of the campaign.*

In a nutshell, the campaign must be conducted with the help of the local community leaders for a better impact on the target audience. The entire campaign should be carried out as per the action-plan. Keep an eye on the activities of the campaign from its beginning to the end. Plan the campaign in such a manner that the probability of any failure is ruled out completely.

It is necessary to have all kinds of meetings to see that the message reaches the desired target. People must be contacted on an individual basis to know their problems. Communication is an art. An ideal health-campaign utilizes all forms of Communication Modes for propagating the campaign message, like exhibitions, slogans, informations-boards, posters, wall papers, radio, etc.

## **Exhibitions**

Apart from other means of communicating the message, exhibition is a very effective way of reaching a great number of target audience without inundating them with useless information in which they are not at all interested.

Exhibition is defined as an organized audio-visual presentation for attracting people to provide a distinct message or educate them on a specific subject. Actually, it is the best medium for educating the non-literates. It propagates the message very effectively, especially in the early stages of a health campaign. The beauty of an exhibition is it provides scientific information in a very interesting and assimilable manner to the maximum number of people at one go. It evokes the interest in the viewer towards the specific campaign and raises sympathy for the cause. All in all, it attracts an entirely new audience which would have not been interested in the subject matter otherwise.

The real challenge in organizing a successful exhibition lies in attaining excellence in displaying complicated and serious facts in a simple and narrative manner to the viewers - like telling an interesting story with a high moral.

Organizing a successful exhibition comprises a number of steps. A few of them are :

- ***Collect information and material on the specific focus of the exhibition.***
- ***Short-list the data by deleting everything else apart from the core focus.***
- ***Do not have too many topics, since it causes confusion in the minds of the viewers.***
- ***Construct a chronological story built around the theme to create an interest in the viewers as well as educate them.***
- ***Select or make models, diagrams, charts, photographs, posters, cut-outs, live exhibits to attract, hold and influence the viewers. The selection should be such that it makes the subject very interesting and still does not contain too much text.***
- ***The display of a panel should be such that it should have a catchy title and the information should be relevant but balanced.***
- ***A panel should not have information on more than one topic or concept.***

The following points must be back-checked while arranging an exhibition because they can spell the success or failure for the exhibition :

- ***Accuracy of information***
- ***Accuracy of presentation***
- ***Appropriate language***
- ***Correct spellings***

To sum it all up, exhibition is an integral part of a larger campaign and should be seen in that light. In a health campaign (or any campaign), people are the prime focus. So, every activity or programme should be woven around them as they are the target audience. Hence, the involvement of the community or people's participation is a must at all the stages of the campaign. After all, a health campaign is of the people, by the people and for the people.