Harambee University Faculty of Health Department of Nursing

Module Title: **Health Promotion and Disease Prevention**

By Adanech B. (Bsc Nurse)

Health Communication

- Communication is the core of health education and promotion programs.
- It is by communication that an individual makes himself/herself to understood by others.
- This act requires an appropriate design so as transmit an effective message.
- It is the process of sharing of ideas, information, knowledge, and experience among people to take action.

- Communication may take place between one person and another, between an individual and a group or between two groups.

- Communication facilitates creation of awareness, acceptance and action at individual, group and inter-group level.

- The process always involves a sender and a receiver regardless of the number of people concerned.

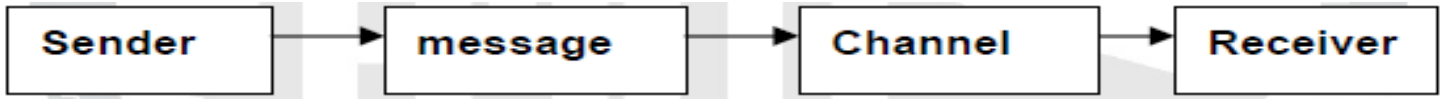
Types of Communication

1. One-way communication

- A linear type of communication in which information flows from the source to the receiver.

- There is no input (feed back) from the receiver.

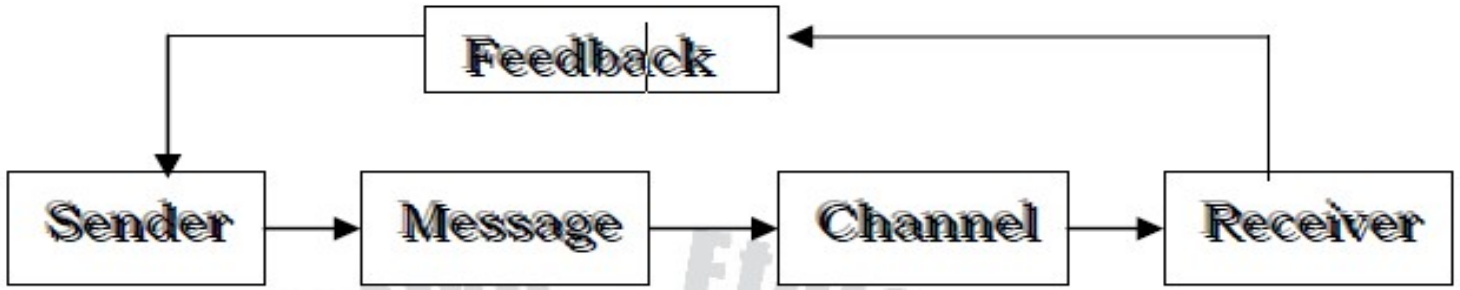
- There is no opportunity to clear up misunderstanding and meaning is controlled by the receiver.



2. Two-way communication

- In this type of communication, information flows from the source to the receiver and back from the receiver to the source.

- The addition of feedback allows the sender to find out how the message is being received and so it can be monitored and adapted to better suit the



Components of communication

1) Source (sender)

- ✓ Originator of message

- ✓ Can be individual or groups, an institution or organization.

2) Message

- It consists of what is actually communicated including the actual appeals, words, and pictures and sounds that you use to get the ideas across.

- A message will only be effective if the advice presented is relevant, appropriate, and acceptable and put across in an understandable way.

3) *Channel*

- A Channel is a physical means by which message travels from a source to a receiver.
- The commonest types of channels are verbal, visual, printed materials or combined audio visual and printed materials.
- Your choice of channel will depend on what you are trying to achieve, the nature of your audience and what resources are at your disposal.

4) Receiver (Audience)

- The person or a group for whom the communication is intended
- The first step in planning any communication is to consider the intended audience.

5) Effect and feedback

- Effect is the change in receiver's knowledge, attitude and practice or behavior.

- Feedback is the mechanism of assessing what has happened on the receiver after communication has occurred.

Factors that make communications attract attention

1. Physical characteristics

- ✓ Size e.g. size of the whole poster
- ✓ Intensity – bold reading in a sentence
- ✓ High pitched sounds e.g. police sirens
- ✓ Color-primary colors such as red and yellow
- ✓ Pictures-photographs and drawing

2. Motivational characteristics

- Novelty - an unusual features, unfamiliar and surprising objects
- Interest - felt needs of audience
- Entertainment and humor

Stage 3: Understanding the message (perception)

- Once a person pays attention he/she then tries to understand it.
- It is a highly subjective process i.e. two people may hear the same radio programme and interpret the message quite differently from each other and from the meaning intended by the sender.

- Misunderstandings can easily take place when complex language, unfamiliar technical words are used and when too much information is presented.

Stage 4: Promoting change (acceptance)

- A communication should not only be received and understood; it should be believed and accepted.

- It is easier to change beliefs when they have been acquired only recently and when its effects can be easily demonstrated.

Stage 5: Producing a change in behavior

- A communication may result in a change in beliefs and attitudes but still may not influence behavior.

- This can happen when the communication has not been targeted at the belief that has the most influence on the person's attitude to the behavior, pressure from other people in the family or community and lack of enabling factors.

Stage 6: Improvement in health

- Improvements in health will only take place if the behaviors have been carefully selected so that they really do influence health.

- If your messages are based on outdated and incorrect ideas, people could follow your advice but their health would not improve – need accurate advice.

Common communication approaches

Informing - The new idea is introduced and made familiar to the target audience.

Educating –

The new idea is explained including its strengths and weaknesses.

Persuading-

The audience is given convincing argument that motivates them to take an action or accept a new idea.

Entertaining –

- The attention of the audience is drawn to the new idea by stimulating the audience's emotions

Methods of Communication

1. Intra - Personal communication

2. Inter - Personal communication

2. Mass communication

Intra-Personal communication

- It takes place inside a person. It includes the beliefs, feelings, thoughts and justification we make for our actions.

- E.g. a person may look at an object and develop a certain understanding.
- However, this could be affected by a number of factors including previous expérience, langage, culture, personal, needs, etc.

Interpersonal Communication

- It means interaction between two or more people who are together at the same time and place.
- E.g. between health extension worker and community member, a teacher and students in a class.
- The decisive criterion for personal communication is that communication happens at the same time and place.

Advantages

- Two way communication
- The communication could utilize multi-channels (both verbal and non verbal) i.e. far more channels are involved than is possible in mass communication.
- Useful when the topic is a taboo or sensitive.

Limitations

- Requires language ability of the source.
- Requires personal status.
- Needs professional knowledge and preparation.

Mass communication

- It is a means of transmitting messages to a large audience that usually reaches a large segment of the population.
- It uses mass media.
- Mass media includes broadcast media (radio and television) as well as print media (newspapers, books, leaflets and posters)

Advantage:

- ✓ Reach many people quickly
- ✓ They are believable specially when the source is a credible one

Limitation:

- ✓ One sided (linear)
- ✓ Doesn’t differentiate the target

Barriers to Effective Communication

- It can inhibit communication, resulting in misunderstanding, lack of response or motivation and distortion of the message.
- This can lead to conflicting of views, insecurity and the inability to make effective decisions.
- Barriers can also prevent the achievement of project or program goals if we are not aware of them or not prepared for them.

Common barriers to effective communication

- Competition for attention (noise**)**
- Language difference and vocabulary use
- Age difference
- Attitudes and Beliefs

How to overcome barriers of communication?

➢The sender must know his/her audience's:

- ✓ Background
- ✓ Age and sex
- ✓ Social status
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Job/work
- ✓ Interests/problems/needs
- ✓ Language
- ✓ The messages must be:
- ✓ Timely
- ✓ Meaningful/relevant
- ✓ Applicable to the situation

The audience must remove their own barriers. Members of the audience could be:

- The non-listener type – who refuse to listen.
- The know-it-all type – who thinks he/she knows the answer to everything.
- The impatient type – who is reluctant to sit and jumps to conclusion.
- The negative personality – who enjoys saying ‘no’ to everyone.

Characteristics of effective communication

- All barriers have been removed.
- The proper media has been chosen.
- A good presentation has been made.
- Two – way communication has been established.

Educational Methods And Materials

Objectives

At the end of this chapter, the trainees are expected to:

- Explain the common methods of transmitting health information
- Describe the advantages and disadvantages of interpersonal and mass media communication means
- Explores the role of counseling at the grass root level
- List major traditional as well as modern methods for group communications
- Explain common teaching aids used for effective communication

Ways to put across health messages:

1. Direct – Interpersonal (Individual and groups)

2. Indirect – Mass media and visual aids.

- To transmit information effectively, you have to choose appropriate educational tools.

- Effective health communication is seldom achieved through the use of one method alone.
- Nearly always, a combination of techniques is needed to achieve behavior changes.
- Both effectiveness and costs must be considered in choosing a combination of techniques.
- Besides, selection of local media is appreciably useful.

1. ***Individual educational methods – Counseling***

- Counseling is one of the approaches most frequently used in health education to help individuals and families.

- It is a person-to-person communication in which one person is helped by another to increase in understanding, ability and confidence to find solutions to own problems

Purposes of counseling

- To help individuals increase knowledge of self
- To encourage individuals or families to think about their problems and understand the causes.
- Help people commit themselves to take action on their own will to solve the problems.
- Help individuals to choose, but not forcing them to do so.

Principles in counseling

- Counseling requires establishing good relationship between the counselor and the client
- Counselors should assist people identify their own problems.
- Counselors develop empathy (understanding and acceptance) for person's feelings.
- Counselors should never try to persuade people to accept their advice.

- Rather help people to think about all the factors involved in their problems and encourage them to choose the solutions that are best in their particular situation.

- Counselors should always respect the privacy of the people they are helping.

- They never reveal information without specific permission.

- Counselors should share information and ideas on resources, which the client needs in order to make a sound decision.

2. Group Educational Methods

- A group could be defined as a collection of two or more people who have a common interest.

- Working with groups is a major activity in health

Types of Groups

1. Formal groups
- Groups that are well organized with some rules and regulations
2. Informal groups
- Groups that are not well organized

Common Methods Used for Group Education

Group discussions

- Discussion in a group allows people to say what is in their minds.
- They can talk about their problems, share ideas, support and encourage each other to solve problems and change their behavior.

Meetings

- They are held to gather information, share ideas, take decisions, and make plans to solve problems.
- Meetings are more organized.
- Meetings are an important part of successful self-help projects.

Clubs

- There are many kinds of organizations to which women, men and young people belong.
- Clubs are becoming popular in many areas.
- They provide an opportunity for a systematic way of teaching over an extended period of time

Demonstrations

- A demonstration is a step-by step procedure
- They involve a mixture of theoretical teaching and of practical work
- It is used to show how to do something.
-
- The main purpose of demonstrations is helping people learn new skills.

Role - playing

- Role-playing consists of the acting out of real-life situations and problems.

- Role-playing can be used to start off a discussion, to see what possible consequences of a certain action are, and to develop a better understanding of why people feel as they do.

- We learn about our own behavior during a role-play, we can discover how our attitudes and values encourage cooperation and problem solving or, how our attitude and values create problems.

Teaching materials (aids)

- The following are some selected teaching aids that are commonly used in health education programs.

1. Audios

- Audios include anything heard such as spoken-word (talk), music or any other sounds.

Characteristics of audios:

- Effective when based on similar or known experience
- Could be distorted or misunderstood when translated
- Easily forgotten

2. Visual aids

- Visuals are objects that are seen.
- They are one of the strongest methods of communicating messages; particularly when accompanied with interactive methods.

Advantages

- They can easily arouse interest
- Provide a clear mental picture of the message
- Speed up and enhance understanding
- Can stimulate active thinking
- Create opportunities for active learning
- Help memory and provide shared experience.
- Visuals are more effective than words alone, and it will be rather more effective when extended to practice (action).

Non-projected materials (aids) or graphics

- They are shown or displayed and do not necessarily depend on any projected equipment.

Leaflets

- Leaflets are unfolded sheet of printed material.

- In preparing them, short sentences and paragraphs should be used, illustrated with simple drawings or pictures that are easily understood.

Newspapers/Newsletters

- Newspapers might be of some help in reaching the villagers.

- Very often, though, the national or regional newspapers do not reach smaller communities, or the people are unable to read them.

Photographs

- Photographs can be used to show people new ideas or new skills being practiced.
- They can also be used to support and encourage new behavior.
- They are best used with individuals and small groups.
- E.g. People can compare photos taken of malnourished children in the village before and after receiving treatment.

Posters

- It is widely used by commercial firms for advertising products, but can also be used for preventive purposes.

Mass Media

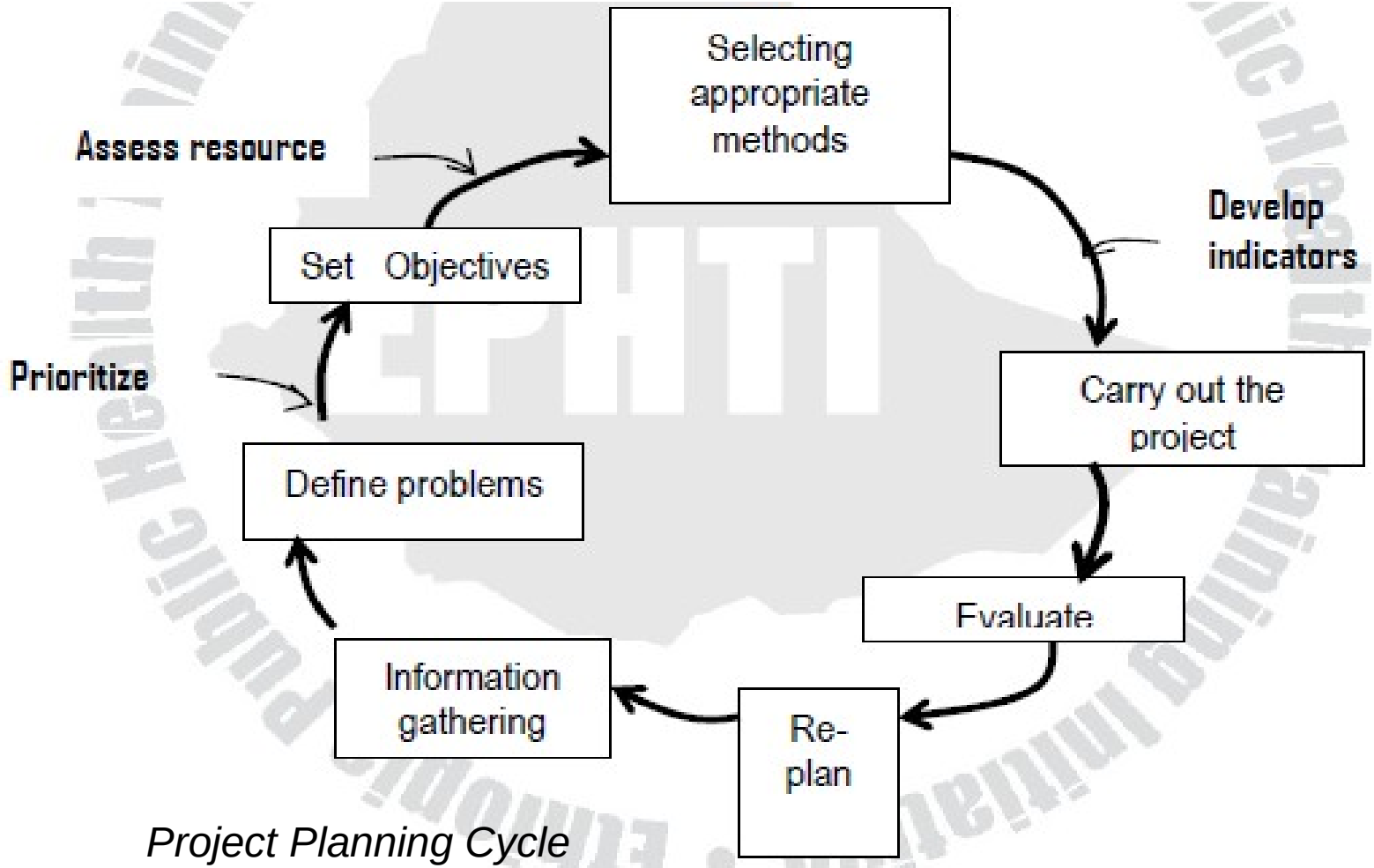
- The communication that is aimed to reach the masses or the people at large
- The commonly used mass media are microphones or public address system, radio, television, cinema, newsprints, posters, exhibitions.

- Mass media are the best methods for rapid spread of simple information and facts to a large population at low cost.

Selection of Teaching Methods and Materials

- The selection of the teaching methods and aids depends on:
  - The type of the message
  - The purpose
  - The people addressed
  - Availability of resources
  - Availability of skills.

Planning, Implementation And Evaluation Of Health Education Programs



Project Planning Cycle

- A plan of work is a picture or “map” of:
  - what to do,
  - when to do it
  - who will do it, and
  - at what cost each step of activities be accomplished.
- It will serve as a guide and will help in implementing and evaluating the project and planning another one.

The Plan of Action should include:

- ✓ Goal and objectives
- ✓ What steps are to be taken - list of activities
- ✓ Who will be responsible for each step - person in charge
- ✓ What materials, equipment, people, funds will be necessary for each step – resources
- ✓ When each step is to be completed - target date.

Steps in Planning

1. Information gathering

2. Defining and prioritizing problems

3. Setting goals and Objectives

4. Identifying and Obtaining Resources

5. Selecting appropriate Methods

6. Carry out and Evaluate the Program

1. Information gathering

- ***The community and its general physical characteristics***
  - Efforts in health education must be based on a clear understanding of the **community** and **its problems**.

These include:

- ✓ The size of the community
- ✓ The kind of crops, food, natural resources existing
- ✓ The transportation routes

Inf n gathering cont'd

- ***Information on the number of people and their characteristics -****may be from available records.*

- ✓ Number of people who live in the area
- ✓ Their sex and age group
- ✓ Average size of a household
- ✓ Average number of pregnancies, children alive, and children died in the last one year
- ✓ Literacy status of the adults

- ***Community groups and their impact on the health care system***

- Identify the existence of various social groups and the nature of relationships both within and between those groups. E.g. Ethnic class, religious groups etc

Inf n gathering cont'd

- ***The communication network***

- To reach the people in the community, it is necessary to know how information and rumors spread within the community.

- ✓ What the formal and informal channels are
- ✓ Who are the participants in those channels
- ✓ Who are the communicators and how effective they are
- ✓ Learn how various leaders communicate their ideas and opinions and note to what extent their messages are accepted.

Inf n gathering cont'd

- ***The family structure***

- Families vary in their composition and in their descent, residence and authority patterns

- An understanding of the family structure, the status of various members of the family and who is involved in the decision-making process within the family on all major decisions as well as those related to health is valuable to work with community.

- Without this knowledge, you may direct your educational activities toward the wrong member of the family.

Inf n gathering cont'd

- ***The political structure in the community***
  - Explore the basis for leadership and power within the community.

- ***The economy and its impact on health***
  - Know about businesses, industries, agricultural conditions, unemployment, family debts, and how the land is distributed.
  - This information will increase your knowledge of what is important to the people and what resources are available to them.

Inf n gathering cont'd

- ***Religion and its impact on health***

- Religion may have a great influence on the lifestyle of the community including the health practices and beliefs of individuals.
- It is important, to know:

- ✓ Who the major religious groups in the community, their leaders & their roles in the community life
- ✓ Whether there is any conflict between them
- ✓ The attitude of the government and the community to wards religious affiliated programs.

Inf n gathering cont'd

- ***Health beliefs and practices***

- How people define good health and disease
- What methods are used to help maintain their health?
- What are people's attitudes towards such services as vaccinations, Family Planning, insecticide spray etc.
- What are local attitudes and practices regarding personal hygiene?
- Are there special beliefs concerning food? When child is ill, for pregnant ladies etc.

Inf n gathering cont'd

- Breast feeding and weaning practice for infants
- Where do most women give birth? Who assists in delivery?
- What methods are used to cut the umbilical cord?
- Are mothers confined in darkroom after delivery?
- Sources of water, excreta disposal, do they know that certain diseases may be contracted through human feces?

Inf n gathering cont'd

- The information could be gathered using formal and informal ways of obtaining information.
- Informal ways include, observing and talking to people, and reading reports, official documents and newspapers.
- Common example for formal method is conducting surveys using structured questionnaires.

2. Defining and prioritizing problems

- Defining of specific health problems must involve the community members.
- Ask questions in an attempt to find out how they view the health situations.
- Start from the general and work down to the specific problems you have in mind.
- Which is the most serious problem?

3. Setting goals and Objectives

- we must know clearly what we want to do and how we are going to do it.
- After people have decided upon their priority needs, they must spell out exactly what they want, i.e. their objectives.
- An Objective is a statement of proposed change over a fixed time period.
- It should be measurable, relevant and possible to achieve.

- It has to describe:

- ✓ What you want to change?

- ✓ How much change you want?

- ✓ For whom or for what you want the change?

- ✓ When? By what time or date?

Types of objectives in health education

1. ***Health Objectives***

- If measles is a serious problem in a community, a primary health care program to solve the problem might have the following as its health objective.

- Fewer children will get measles

- Those who do get measles will recover quickly and suffer no disabilities

- No children will die from measles.

2. Educational Objectives

- Since people's behavior affects their health, there will be certain actions that people must carry out to solve their health problems.

- Such are educational objectives of a program. Some examples of educational objectives for a program against measles include:

4. Identifying and Obtaining Resources

- ***Resources inside the community***

- It is best to find resources inside your community for two reasons:

1. It saves money

2. People are proud to be able to help themselves, which in turn encourage people to try to solve more problems by their own efforts. Some of them include:

Identifying and Obtaining Resource cont'd

- Places to hold meetings, discussions, and trainings, such as schools, and halls
- Some people may be able to donate money to buy materials.
- Some have skills to contribute, e.g. carpenters, teachers, masons, artists, traditional healers, weavers and potters
- Many can provide labour.
- Some may support transport: bicycle, motor cycle or vehicle

Identifying and Obtaining Resource cont'd

- ***Resources outside the community***

- If resources within are not adequate one may seek from outside:

- Some agencies and ministries can donate funds

- People with special skills, such as finding under ground water for wells, may come from outside.

- Educational materials such as films and posters could be given from outside agencies.

Identifying and Obtaining Resource cont'd

- **Health education Resources**

Local Media

- One should be able to identify local and traditional means of communication such as proverbs, stories, and fables, which elders use to pass traditional values on to the young.

- Local leaders may use village criers or bell-ringers to announce upcoming events.

- Traditional songs or plays may communicate important ideas and values.

- Local artists, printers, and photographers can be involved in designing, and producing educational materials.

Identifying and Obtaining Resource cont'd

- ***Outside sources***

- These may include mass media such as newspapers and radio.

- Ministries of health and information could supply or loan films, posters, and vans with loudspeakers.

- A local school teacher who is a subscriber of newspaper can use to teach pupils and inform parents.

5. Selecting appropriate Methods

- Before choosing health education methods:

- ✓ How fast do people change?
- ✓ How many people are involved?
- ✓ Is the method appropriate to the local culture?
- ✓ What resources are available?
- ✓ What combined methods are needed?
- ✓ What methods fit the characteristics (age, sex, religion etc) of the target group?

Selecting appropriate Methods Cont'd

- ***How fast do people change?***

- Some people are ready for change and are economically able to do the advice easily. For such people provision of information through posters, radio, songs, plays, stories or displays could suffice.

- Some are ready but influence from others could hinder. Direct contact with such people is the preferred method. E.g. convincing grandmother for immunization.

- For those who are economically unable, linking them with sectors that help them earn money is a remedy

Selecting appropriate Methods Cont'd

- ***How many people involved?***

- Providing good ideas quickly to a large number of people is a very helpful step in health education.

- It creates awareness of a problem or idea.

- But it may not be enough to change health behavior.

- Posters, lectures, display, plays, newspapers, radio, films and village criers are appropriate for large groups.

Selecting appropriate Methods Cont'd

- Activities such as practicing new skills, discussing personal feelings, values and money matters, and sharing difficult experiences are best done person-to-person, or in small groups using story-telling, demonstrations, role-playing, case studies, discussions and educational games.

Is the method appropriate for the local culture?

Selecting appropriate Methods Cont'd

- Culture will determine the educational methods that will be acceptable and understandable to people.

- Some methods may not be accepted in one culture while it may be effective in the others. For example Role-playing, photographs, or films may not be adaptive to illiterate community.

- In such communities we can use the most natural way of communication such as proverbs, village criers, plays, songs and so on.

- Practical demonstrations are good ways of teaching skills.

Selecting appropriate Methods Cont'd

- ***What resources are needed?***

- Some methods require the use of machines: tape recorders, films or slide projectors, which at the same time require electricity.

- Other methods require the use of teaching aids such as posters, flannel graphs, demonstrations, models, flip charts and the like.

- On the other hand, some methods require only yourself and the people around you; these include the use of stories and songs, role-plays, group discussions, and community meetings.

Selecting appropriate Methods Cont'd

- ***What combined methods are needed?***

- Ideally, use of mix of methods and repetition improves understanding and people are more likely to remember them.

- The following combinations may be used:

- ✓ Story telling and asking the audience to role-play in which they act out the story for all to see

- ✓ Lecture assisted with posters, films or demonstrations.

- ✓ Community meeting with displays or short play.

Selecting appropriate Methods Cont'd

- ***Which methods fit the group best?***

Health education could be designed for various groups of people: old, young, women groups, children and so on.

- Select and adapt your methods to fit the type of people you meet.
- Fables using animals might be better for children than for adults.
- Lectures are more applied for educated.
- If the people belong to one religion, select proverbs from the scriptures on books of that religion.

6. Carry out and Evaluate the Program

- Evaluation is the process of looking back over what has been done to be sure that things were done the way they should.
- Evaluation is not a one-time event.
- It is a continuous process how the program is progressing according to a set time table in the action plan.
- Information for evaluation program would be obtained from observations, interviews, and records.

- By the end of the educational activities, you should be able to measure their successes by counting how many people are behaving according to the original objectives

- At the end of the program, a final meeting can be held to discuss how far the program succeeded.


Thanks