

Setting objectives for hygiene education

Aims and objectives

An aim is a general statement of what is to be done. An objective is a more precise statement of what is planned over a fixed time period. An objective should be *measurable*. The most important part of planning a programme is setting the objectives. Setting measurable objectives will help to :

- Let others know exactly what is being planned ;
- Make decisions about implementation ;
- Evaluate the programme.

Another word for objective is *target*.

Intermediate and outcome objectives

Objectives can be set for the intended *outcomes* of the programme. It is also useful to set objectives for *intermediate stages* on the way to reaching the desired outcome. These are sometimes called operational - or intermediate - objectives. This Fact Sheet shows how these intermediate objectives can be displayed on a workplan and bar chart, and used to monitor a programme.

Outcome objectives :

- Improvements in health, for example diarrhoea incidence ;
- Changes in behaviour, for instance handwashing ;
- Changes in knowledge, beliefs and attitudes.

Intermediate objectives :

- Initial surveys ;
- Formation of an organizing committee ;
- Training of key workers ;
- Field visits ;

- Broadcasting of radio programmes ;
- Testing of educational materials ;
- Printing of publications ;
- Purchase of equipment ;
- Completion of health education activities ;
- Evaluation surveys.

The objective of using a specific communication or message should specify :

- The intended change in a detailed measurable form, for instance : acquire facts ; develop decision-making ability ; change beliefs ; change behaviour ; learn a practical skill ; and completion of the training programme.
- The amount of change above the initial baseline level, for instance : the percentage of people able to demonstrate to the interviewer how to make up oral rehydration solution correctly should increase from 10 to 50 per cent.
- Who the communication should be directed at (including where they live). This is often called the target group, for instance : grand-mothers in Eastern Province, adult men in Lusaka, church ministers in the whole country, teachers in Chingleput District, women with one child in Yunan Province.
- The time scale over which the desired change should take place, for instance : over the next twelve months.
- Changes that are relevant and realistic.

Examples of objectives :

The percentage of children between 3 and 15 years in Bangara District using latrines, as determined by household survey, will increase from the current level of 20 per cent to a level of 70 per cent over the three years between 1994 to 1997.

The percentage of women aged 18-45 years in the six project villages in Tilar District who, on being asked ways to prevent cholera, will include handwashing as one of their responses, will increase from the current level of 10 per cent in 1994 to a level of 80 per cent by 1997.

Workplans

It is important to set out the general aims of a cholera prevention programme in a table specifying aims, target group, method and accompanying materials. The table can be made into an even more useful planning tool by expressing the aims as measurable objectives and giving dates for the reaching of targets.