

HEALTH ACHIEVERS FOUNDATION

Note from Dennis

Dear friends and supporters,

Over the past four years, Health Achievers Foundation (HAF) has made a tangible and lasting impact in the People of Baringo County - Kenya. Our vision at HAF is to enhance health promotion awareness and development among the populations for sustainable future, leading to more complete health for all. Our values are centered on empowering individuals, voluntarism, autonomy to and our programs exist to provide these individuals health baselines. Our objectives underlines, health promotion, behaviour change sustainable abuse and environmental change.

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Health Achievers Foundation (HAF) is a charitable organization based in Kaprogonya Village in the Baringo Central District in Kabarnet Division Kenya. It was founded as a private trust in 2010 by Makiya Dennis a Kenyan citizen residing in Kenya. HAF was registered as a Community Based Organization (CBO) with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development in 2012 (Reg. DGSD/BGO/CBO/195



Sincerely

Makiya Dennis
founder

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Be An Agent of Change

To make a donation, be a volunteer or discuss further opportunities to be an agent of change through Health Achievers Foundation, please contact Makiya Dennis at dennismakiya@yahoo.com.

Bank Details are as follow:

Account Name: Health Achievers Foundation

Account Number: 1137881879

Bank: Kenya Commercial Bank

Branch: Kabarnet – Kenya

Currency: US Dollars

Swift Code: KCBLKENX

BANK CODE 01152

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HEALTH PROMOTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

People would be healthier and suffer from fewer diseases if they did some things differently. For instance, if children were immunized and ate balanced diet; if people drank clean water and disposed of excreta and rubbish in hygienic ways; if they did not smoke and had fewer sexual partners, they would be healthier. It was often assumed that people did not know what to do- they were ignorant- and did not know what health workers knew. Therefore, if they were well “health educated” they would all be sensible and do as they were told and their health would consequently improve.

However, things are not that simple. People often have good reasons for the way they do things, such as money or time constraints or different value systems. Changing behavior in relation to health is not easy and depends on more than knowledge. Therefore, notices about the date of an immunization clinic, posters about not smoking, or health talks about digging latrines and limiting sex to one partner are unlikely, by themselves, to achieve their objectives.

Health promotion takes a wider perspective. For health promotion to be effective, it is essential that health workers begin by actively listening and finding out why people do things the way they do. In discussion, and sometimes by example, it is possible to stimulate people’s interest in their health problems. Their attitudes, values and beliefs provide good pointers for tailoring strategy and health messages to local needs. When interest is shown, it is important to provide technical background information, discuss and work with people to set health priorities, and help them see that changes can take place.

Health promotion received a big boost at the Alma Ata International Conference on Primary Health Care in 1978. Primary Health Care was as an approach that would ensure health services are accessible, acceptable, affordable and available to all people of the world. Key to ensuring effective implementation of primary health care were its pillars namely:

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- Community participation during all stages of implementation
- Intersectoral collaboration for synergistic efforts and effective resource utilization
- Use of appropriate technology that is needs-based and sustainable

The Alma Ata declaration identified various key elements for PHC implementation with health education ranked as the most important approach for effective health promotion, and disease prevention.

1.2 Strategies for health promotion

There are three main strategies used in the implementation of health promotion.

Enabling

In health promotion, enabling means taking action in partnership with individuals or groups to empower them, through the mobilization of human and material resources, to promote and protect their health. Health promotion seeks to strengthen peoples' health knowledge and the skills required to prevent ill health, enhance and protect healthy behavior. This is achieved mainly through health education, IEC and social mobilization interventions among individuals and communities.

Creating environments that are supportive of health

In order to create and sustain environments that are supportive of health, health promotion facilitates mediation in society. In this context, mediation refers to a process through which the different interests of individuals and communities, and different sectors, both public and private, are reconciled in ways that promote and protect health. This is achieved through legal, economic and environmental policies and legislation.

Advocacy to create the essential conditions for health

Advocacy for health implies a combination of individual and social actions designated to gain political commitment, policy support, social acceptance and systems support for a particular health programme. Advocacy may be carried out through lobbying, social marketing, IEC and community organizing.

1.3 HEALTH PROMOTION APPROACHES

There are various approaches to health promotion which use different means to achieve the goals. However, they all aim to promote good health and to prevent or reduce the effects of ill health.

Behavior change

This approach aims to bring about change in individual behavior through changes in individuals' knowledge. Also known as the "informative-giving model", it is usually implemented through provision of information related to health risks through mass media, leaflets or posters. Information is presented as factual and attributed to an expert source. It assumes that human beings are rational decision makers whose knowledge informs their actions.

In this approach, health promotion is really synonymous with health education that aims to increase individuals' knowledge about the cause of health and illness. An example is giving information to clients about the effects of smoking and helping them to explore their own values and attitudes and come to a decision. This is basically helping them to learn how to stop smoking if they want to.

However, the behavior change approach operates "top-down" and recommendations made may be incompatible with a community's norms and values. In addition, it assumes

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homogeneity among the recipients of health promotion messages and that there is a direct link between knowledge, attitudes and behaviour.

Self empowerment approach

The goal of this approach is to empower individuals to make health choices. Self empowerment can be defined as the process by which groups and individuals increase their control over their physical, social and internal environments. In order to facilitate self-empowerment, participatory learning techniques allow people to examine their own values and beliefs and explore the extent to which factors such as past socialization and social location affect the choices they make. Examples of participatory learning techniques include group work, counseling, training, storytelling and educational drama.

Community development

The community development approach aims to improve health by addressing social economic and environmental cause of ill health. In this, individuals organize and act collectively in order to change their physical and social environments. The key characteristic of this approach is that it begins from the experiences and perspectives of communities.

There is participatory planning through community needs assessment, goal setting, resource planning and task allocation to as many participants as possible.

The main benefits of this approach is improved networking in a community, identification of health needs from users' point of view, in particular the disadvantaged and socially excluded groups, development of local services and structures that act as a resource and improved self esteem and learning of new skills.

1.4 DEVELOPING HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAMMES

Health promotion is an essential part of all health care services. Primary preventive measures, such as immunization, personal hygiene and child spacing, all require an input from health promotion.

A health promotion programme comprises a co-ordinated group of activities which aim to achieve defined objectives and delivered by a wide range of professionals. Developing a health programme involves identifying and prioritizing health issues and needs with the community, policy makers and other health care providers. These should be based prioritized. This means deciding on the most important or pressing issues and needs, deciding on ways to address them committing resources for the planned activities. This must be inclusive and participatory process.

The health promotion programme should include:

- a) Rationale: why is the programme needed?
- b) Population group: who are the affected population and how will they be involved in the process?
- c) Programme description: what will the programme do? What are the goal, objectives and activities?
- d) Linkages: health promotion programmes are activities based on collaboration and co-operation with other sectors and health workers will need to co-ordinate activities of all partners in the programme.
- e) Review and evaluation
- f) Resources: identify all resources required including human and financial.

1.5 MEASURING CHANGES IN BEHAVIOUR-EVALUATION

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The weakness of health promotion in the past was failure to measure results, that is, to evaluate. All those involved in health promotion need training in both qualitative and quantitative aspects of evaluation. The aim of health promotion is to change peoples' attitudes and behavior, and it is possible to measure these changes. In the short term, evaluation involves developing specific indicators for looking at the process. For instance, the number of health education sessions undertaken, the number of children immunized, or the number of households drawing water from protected sources. The longer term results are seen in indicators for the outcome or impact of the programme, for example the incidence of measles is reduced or there are fewer water-borne diseases. Documenting the results of health promotion programmes is important, whether or not the objectives are achieved. Everyone learns from mistakes as well as from success. We should also evaluate ourselves as agents of improved health behaviour.

1.6 PRACTICAL APPROACHES TO HEALTH PROMOTION

There are various approaches that can be applied to ensure effective health promotion in a community. The main approaches discussed here include individual approaches, group approaches, environmental approaches, media approaches and screening.

Individual approaches

Each time health professionals interact with a patient in the course of their work they have an opportunity to find out more about that person and share information. Interacting with individuals on one-to-one basis is an effective way of communicating a message.

Remember it is possible to assist individuals to make healthier choices by making the healthier choices the easy choices. For instance, providing quality fresh fruit and vegetables at prices which compare favourably with less food choices means that people are more likely to buy fresh fruits and vegetables.

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Models of individual health behavior change

Both psychological (internal) and environmental (external) factors motivate people's behavior which, in turn may affect health. These factors are also influenced by thoughts, feelings and values. A variety of models and theories have been developed to explain how these factors interact.

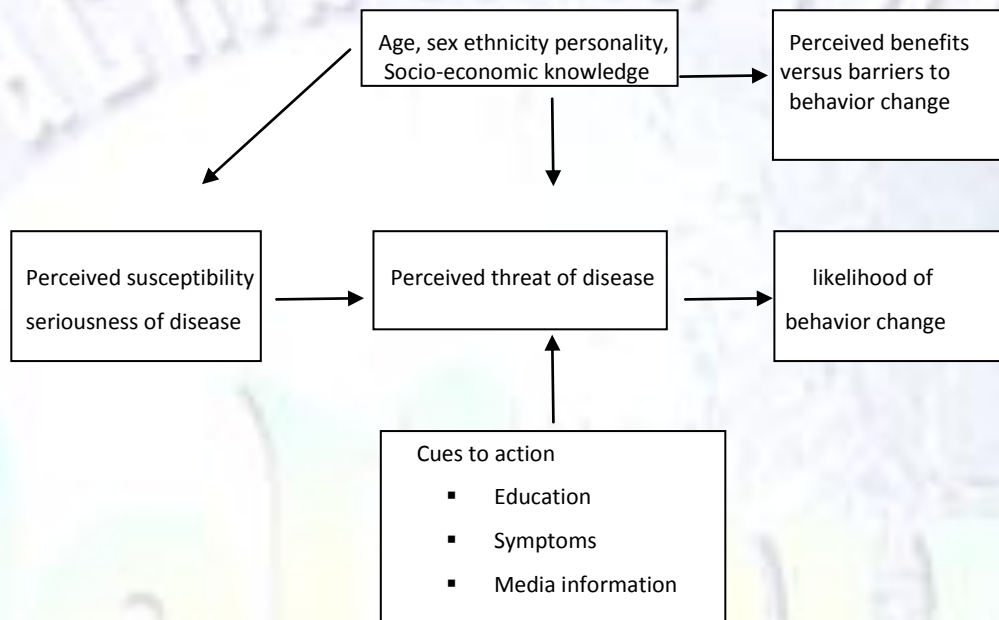
Two important models for understanding the basis for brief interventions with individuals are the Health Belief Model as described below and the Stages of Behaviour Change Model.

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INDIVIDUAL PERCEPTIONS

MODIFYING FACTORS

LIKELYHOOD OF ACTION



For example if parents may organize immunization for a child if they:

- Believe there is danger of the child contracting the disease (perceived susceptibility)
- Believe that immunization is effective in eliminating the danger (perceived benefits)
- Trust that the method is safe and has an acceptable level of risk (possibly through education and media information)
- Have the means to access the vaccination service (no barriers to behavior change)

Working with groups

Health promotion, whether it is lobbying for political change, community development work or education and training involve working with groups of people. As the health care provider it is important to develop skills in group work to enhance its efficiency and effectiveness in achieving health promotion goals. Groups can comprise three or more people, families or organizations. At times one may have to work with clubs for example (football, members' club), youth groups, and women groups among others.

Health promotion activities focusing on groups can target various places e.g. where the target is on prevention of a disease like HIV/AIDS the focus can be schools, work places or religious

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gatherings. Where the focus is on intervention, health promotion can take place at health centres, orphanage or home for the disabled.

At the group level various group media tools can be used such as newsletters, bulletins, pamphlets, plays, puppet shows, songs and dances as well as competitions and sports.

Working with groups has various merits:

- 1) Generally people “go where people are” that is, like doing what are doing.
- 2) Handling a group is more economical than working with individuals.
- 3) Within group individuals are more likely to generate creative ideas rather than when they are working alone.
- 4) There is a sense of security and shared responsibilities that is very important for effective health promotion.

When conducting a small group discussions for health promotion remember to:

Set a conducive learning environment by creative dialogue that will involve everyone. Go step by step by finding out what the people already know. Let them share their real life experiences as well as with regard to the topic of discussion.

After sharing what they know and their practical experiences, analyze the information through discussions and inputs from each member. Also take this opportunity to correct misconceptions while adding new information and ideas that they had not raised.

Lastly, while working in their respective groups help the individuals to develop their own action plans and approaches they will follow to evaluate their successes.

Environmental approaches

Health promotion has a key role to play in ensuring a safe environment. There are various approaches that can be applied to ensure a safe environment. These include:

- Interventions towards modifications to the environment
- Development and enforcement of policy and legislation
- Relevant technical interventions
- Intersectoral approach for organizational interventions

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- The use of incentives and disincentives
- Advocacy and lobbying

Well planned environmental interventions should be culturally acceptable. It should be noted that some of the interventions require input at community level, regional and national levels.

Some of the examples include;

- Fencing roads in major city or towns to control the road crossing points by individuals hence reducing traffic accidents
- Planting of trees offer shade and reduce the amount of dust that may be responsible for the spread of various diseases.

Communication media

Use of media for both health promotion is very important. It reaches a wider population and the message is not distorted. There are two types of media that one can use based on the type of message, resources available and target group. They include:

- Limited reach media – targets individuals or groups
- Mass media – reaching every one.

The table below provides a list of limited reach media that can be used with individuals and groups.

Type	Characteristics
Pamphlets, brochures, fact sheets, bookletsS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Best distributed through service outlets (health centres, women's centres, shops and so on.▪ Useful in one-to-one education.▪ Useful for passing on information about sensitive issues.▪ Can increase knowledge and affect attitudes.▪ More effective if used to support other strategies.
Newsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Can be produced by interested community members and health centre staff▪ Useful for information sharing

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be illustrated for visual reinforcements of the written message
Posters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can provide effective visual representation of an idea Groups can design or produce them on their own Reinforces group identity
Videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructional and motivational Can be stopped for discussion along the way Useful for personal viewing as back-up to other strategies Useful for skills training
Songs, dance, stories and puppet shows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commonly used in African culture as a means to instruct Can be created locally and transmitted more widely Useful for passing on information about sensitive issues Can reinforce traditional values and practices
Banners and murals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useful for awareness raising Provide a visual message Groups can design or produce them on their own More effective if used to support other strategies

Screening activities

Screening is the process of checking or assessing individuals, families or communities to identify if they have certain health problems or risks of developing health problems. Based on the finding the individual, family or community is advised on the action to take for effective prevention of disease occurrence or progression. Various approaches in screening include:

- History taking on various health risks, behavior or exposures.
- Examining a person, family or entire community such as taking weight and height to estimate the nutritional status of the person
- Laboratory tests such as blood test for malaria

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Types of screening

- Mass screening: involves screening whole populations e.g. taking blood pressure, blood sugar levels or HIV testing for people in a community
- Targeted screening: involves focusing on individuals with a high likelihood of suffering from a certain health problem
- Opportunistic screening: involves the health care worker taking advantage of an opportunity when they interact with the patients. One could ask a child about the possibility of physical abuse during a schools health exercise.

After screening is done appropriate interventions should be undertaken such as treatment, referral, or counseling among others.

Effectiveness of screening for health promotion

- Helps to detect health problems for prompt interventions
- Identify individuals at risk and offer health education
- Helps reach the un-reached populations
- Raise community awareness about health issues affecting them
- Helps in the planning of various community health interventions
- Can be used for evaluation of health promotion initiatives. Regular screening exercises- for conditions for which remedial action is possible- should be conducted in all communities.