



STEPS OF PLANNING OF HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMME

INTRODUCTION

A health education programme may focus both on the individual and society however; contemporary approaches to health education recognize the importance of various contributions including a concern for the role of society. This perspective recognizes that factors such as income, housing, cultural practices and the like shape a person's health potential. WHO's Targets for Health for All recognizes that there are limits to the choices open to individuals i.e. limits imposed by their physical, social and cultural environments and by their financial means.

Planning is one of the most important project management and time management techniques. Planning is preparing a sequence of action steps to achieve some specific goal. It is a process of setting goals, developing strategies, and outlining tasks and schedules to accomplish the goals. If we do it effectively, one can reduce the necessary time and effort of achieving the goal. A plan is like a map. following a plan, we can always see how much we have progressed towards goal and how far we are from our destination. Knowing our position is for making good decisions on where to go or what to do next. Strategic provides a roadmap and directions on how to get there. It is used to guide all



much
When
project
essential
planning
decisions.

Planning is a continuous process. It is a series of decisions, from general strategic decisions based on the collection and analysis of a wide range of information. Careful planning is essential to the success of all health education programmes. Planning is deciding in advance what to do, how to do and who is to do it. Planning bridges the gap between where we are where we want to go. It makes possible things to occur which would not otherwise occur. Planning can be thought of as a cycle that has six steps. Thus, a planning may be defined as a map, as preparation and as an arrangement. It directs where one wants to go, how to get there and the timetable for the journey. Planning can also identify the journey's milestones. Complete planning sets out indicators for tracking progress and ways to measure the progress.

NEED FOR PLANNING

Planning plays an important role in health education. It involves a systematic framework for the proper implementation and promotion of health programme. Some of the needs are:

1. To get the desired end point right from the very beginning.
2. To direct resources to where they will have the greatest impact.
3. To ensure the development and implementation of effective and appropriate health promotion programming.

Further, following points are to be kept orderly in mind while planning.

1. Defining community health problems.
2. Identifying unmet needs.
3. Surveying resources to meet them.
4. Establishing priority goals, those are realistic and feasible.
5. Projecting administrative action to accomplish the purpose of proposed programs.

INITIATIVE OF THE HEALTH PLANNING

The health planning process occurs within the health service sector, usually initiated by government or bodies delegated by government to manage health resources in an area, such as a Regional Health Authority and Local Health Integration Networks which are designated to manage local health planning efforts. A health planning process may also be led by service providers such as mental health agencies, hospitals, public health agencies and other service

providers to help them define future roles or immediate service goals. Professional associations may also establish planning processes to address areas of interest.

PRINCIPLES OF PLANNING IN HEALTH EDUCATION

There are six important principles of planning in health education:

1. It is important that plans are made with the needs and context of the community in mind. One should try to understand what is currently happening in the community that he works in.
2. Consider the basic needs and interests of the community. If the person do not consider the local needs and interests, then the plans will not be effective.
3. Plan with the people involved in the implementation of an activity. If the plan includes people, they will be more likely to participate, and the plan will be more likely to succeed.
4. Identify and use all relevant community resources.
5. Planning should be flexible, not rigid. It can also be modified when necessary.
6. The planned activity should be achievable, and take into consideration the financial, personnel, and time constraints on the resources available. So one should not plan unachievable activities.

STEPS OF PLANNING

At its core, health planning follows the same basic steps that any planning process follows. In health planning these steps constitute a cycle that is normally repeated in terms of planning for programs, systems, populations or health goals. Generally, there are six different steps in planning. These include-

Step 1 (Assess need)

Step 2 (Identify and prioritize)

Step 3(Set goals and objectives)

Step 4 (Develop strategy)

Step 5 (Implementation)

Step 6 (Monitor and evaluate)

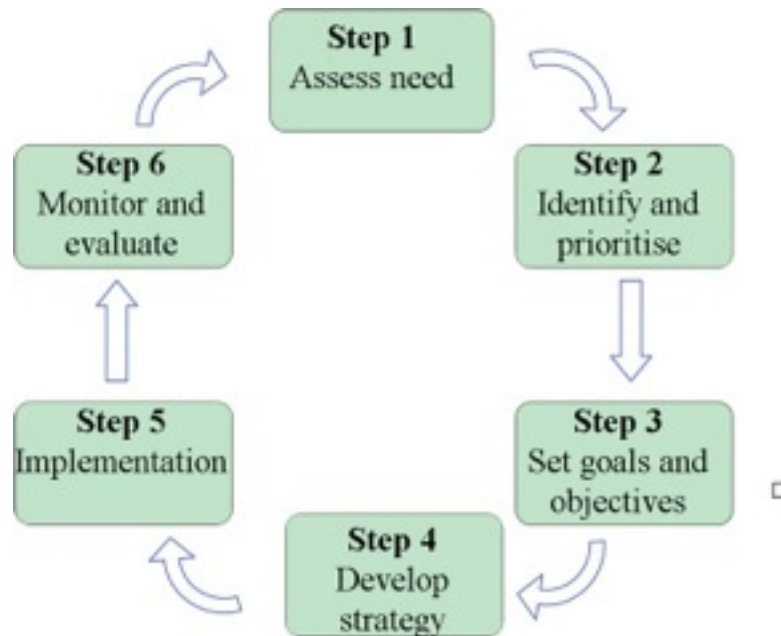


Fig.: Steps in Planning Health Education Programme.
(Source: Henk van Stokkom)

Step 1 (Assess need)

1. Identify existing and needed resources to conduct assessments
2. Identify educators to participate in the assessment process
3. Apply theories and models to develop assessment strategies
4. Develop plans for data collection, analysis, and interpretation
5. Engage educators to participate in the assessment process
6. Integrate research designs, methods, and instruments into assessment plan
7. Identify emerging health education needs
8. Report assessment findings

Step 2 (Identify and prioritize)

1. Incorporate principles of community organization

2. Identify priority populations
3. Communicate need for health education to priority populations and the educators
4. Develop collaborative efforts among priority populations and the educators
5. Elicit input from priority populations
6. Obtain commitments from priority populations

Step 3(Set goals and objectives)

1. Use assessment results to inform the planning process
2. Identify desired outcomes utilizing the needs assessment results
3. Select planning models for health education
4. Develop goal statements
5. Formulate specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-sensitive objectives
6. Assess resources needed to achieve objectives

Step 4 (Develop strategy)

1. Assess efficacy of various strategies to ensure consistency with objectives
2. Design theory-based strategies and interventions to achieve stated objectives
3. Select a variety of strategies and interventions to achieve stated objectives
4. Comply with legal and ethical principles in designing strategies and interventions
5. Apply principles of cultural competence in selecting and designing strategies and interventions
6. Pilot test strategies and interventions

Step 5(Implementation)

1. Assess readiness for implementation.
2. Collect baseline data.
3. Use strategies to ensure cultural competence in implementing health education plans
4. Use a variety of strategies to deliver a plan of action
5. Promote plan of action
6. Apply theories and models of implementation
7. Launch plan of action
8. Monitor Implementation of Health Education

9. Monitor progress in accordance with timeline
10. Assess progress in achieving objectives
11. Modify plan of action as needed
12. Monitor use of resources
13. Monitor compliance with legal and ethical principles
14. Train Individuals Involved in Implementation of Health Education
15. Select training participants needed for implementation
16. Identify training needs
17. Develop training objectives
18. Create training using best practices
19. Demonstrate a wide range of training strategies
20. Deliver training
21. Evaluate training
22. Use evaluation findings to plan future training

Step6 (Monitor and evaluate)

1. Create purpose statement
2. Develop evaluation and research questions
3. Assess feasibility of conducting evaluation and research
4. Critique evaluation and research methods and findings found in the related literature
5. Synthesize information found in the literature
6. Assess the merits and limitations of qualitative and quantitative data collection for evaluation and research
7. Identify existing data collection instruments
8. Critique existing data collection instruments for evaluation and research
9. Create a logic model to guide the evaluation process
10. Develop data analysis plan for evaluation and research
11. Apply ethical standards in developing the evaluation and research plan

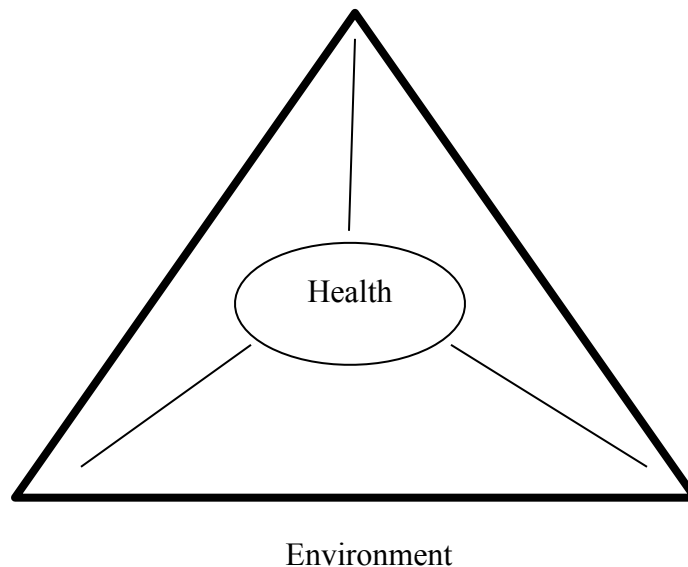
STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS COMPONENTS

Within any strategic planning exercise the following activities will occur:

1. A visioning exercise
2. Creating mission and goals
3. Establishing objectives
4. Establishing strategic directions
5. Developing a framework to establish and monitor success i.e. a balanced scorecard approach for instance
6. Creating an implementation plan and timetable.

BASIC PREMISES OF HEALTH PLANNING

Health planning requires a background understanding of the functioning of the health system in a given country. In any health system, there are three important elements that are highly interdependent, namely: the community, the health service delivery system and the environment where the first two elements operate. The following diagram illustrate the interdependence of different elements of health planning.



Health Service
Delivery System

Community

Fig: Elements of Health Planning (Source: WHO)

Environment:

Environment is one of the context in which the health service delivery system operates. The contextual environment could be the political system, health-care policies and developmental policies. It could also include the socio-economic status or the physical environment, e.g. climatic conditions. All these elements have a bearing on the health planning of the individual and the community, as well as the functioning of the health service delivery system.

Health service delivery system:

How health facilities are distributed in the community, which could also have a bearing on Coverage is the depiction of the health service delivery system. Similarly, health services could also be viewed in terms of their affordability and responsiveness to equity which contribute to the health planning of the community.

Community:

The characteristics of the society, such as culture, gender, caste, creed, religion, beliefs and health-seeking behaviour, together with the environment and health service delivery system, determine the health planning.

The Planning Cycle:

The planning cycle is a sequence of steps which must be followed in deciding what is to be included in the plan. The cycle seeks to answer the following questions:

- i. Where are we now?
- ii. Where do we want to go?
- iii. How will we get there?
- iv. How will we know when we get there?

The above questions may be presented in the following manner.

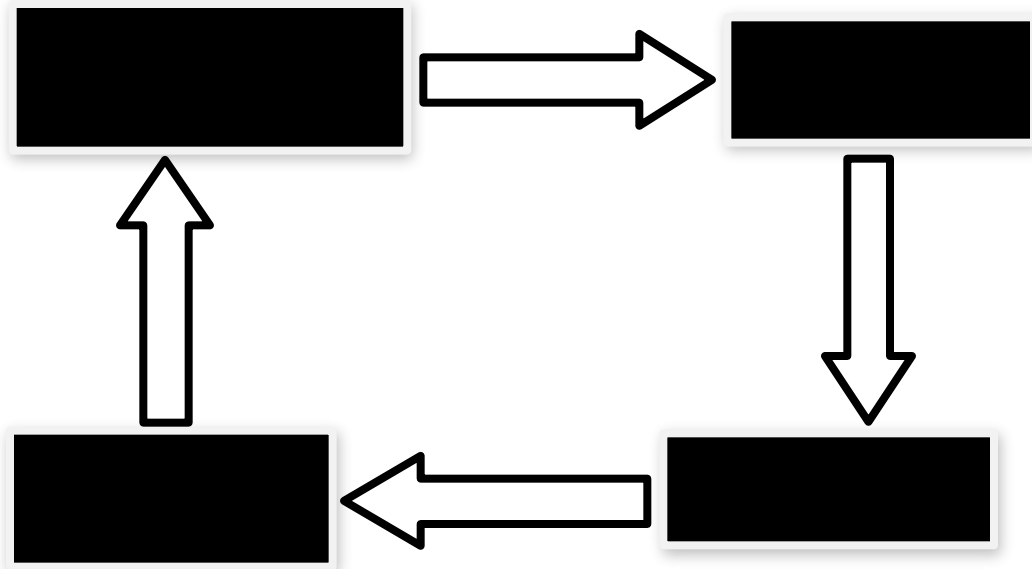


Fig: The
Planning Cycle (Source: WHO)

TYPES OF PLANNING HEALTH EDUCATION

Health planning includes several specific types of planning. They are:

1. Health system planning.
2. Health goals planning.
3. Health services planning.
4. Population health planning.

1. Health System Planning:

The system itself is usually planned at the provincial government level, and by provincial agents such as regional health boards. A well-organized and functioning system of health services is like the connectivity of the human body system. There are two essential phases of health systems planning:

- a) The design and system development phase
- b) Implementation of the system management and operations components.

2. Health Goals Planning:

These had varying levels of success but were important in engaging municipal government and provider groups, as well as citizens, in discussion of the broader determinants of health. These goals can be considered part of any local health system planning exercise and will offer a macro framework for health goals and how to establish and report on them.

3. Health services planning:

Health services planning relates to a specific type of service or sector. For example, mental health service delivery. This type of planning can be undertaken by government or devolved to providers. The Mental Health Implementation Task Forces convened across Ontario in 2002/03 are a good example of taking a specific sectoral approach to service planning. It represented a combined planning effort on the part of government, providers and client advocacy groups.

4. Population Health Planning:

The population health concept is commonly used as a tool for public health and for others interested in health promotion activities. Population health starts from the premise of understanding and then improving the health status of a particular population or the population of a community as a whole. Strategic planning for population health usually focuses on macro issue identification and related strategy development.

CONCLUSION

Planning in health education comprises a range of activities that share the goal of improving health outcomes, or improving the efficiency of health services provision, or both. A solid and well-designed health planning process will be resilient enough to accommodate the society and to use them as levers to go forward and solutions for improved health care provision and health outcomes in the population of a particular society.