Linking Community Groups to Primary Health Care Services

“Enhancing Primary Health Care Services project – Tajikistan” (Sino V)

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Structure of Presentation

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Introduction
Background in subject area

- Family Medicine development is a key element in Health Reform in Tajikistan\(^1\)
- A model for community involvement and health promotion, developed by Project Sino\(^2\)

\(^1\) “National Health Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2010-2020

\(^2\)”Project Sino Community group involvement”, Nov 2007 and Technical Note #14: “Community Participation and Health Promotion within Project Sino”, 2013
Project and activities
“Enhancing Primary Health Care Services project – Tajikistan” (Sino V)

Financing Agency:
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

Implementing Agency:
Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute, Basel
Representative office Swiss TPH, Republic of Tajikistan
Save the Children, Switzerland
Save the Children, Republic of Tajikistan
“Enhancing primary health care services project – Tajikistan” (Project Sino V)

Overall goal of the project:
Men, women and children benefit from better health thanks to improved primary health care services and health promotion activities at community level, in rural areas

Expected outcomes:
- Improved primary care delivery
- Communities‘ empowerment
Methods / Approaches

- “Bottom-up” approach was tested and being used in health promotion activities:
  - Responds to community defined health needs
  - Concentrates on setting up community groups
  - Points at empowering ownership for health within the village communities
Methods / approaches (continuation)

- Prioritization of health problems in Participatory Reflection and Action sessions

- Discussion of the possible solutions and undertaking actions by community groups together with Primary Health Care/Family Medicine staff
Methods / approaches (continuation)

MODEL for linking community groups to Primary Health Care and Healthy Life Style services to encourage health promotion and disease prevention activities
Implemented activities

Major health priority issues, identified by the community groups, using participatory approach and then piloted:

- TB
- Breastfeeding
- Diabetes
- Diarrhea
- Complementary feeding
- Iodine deficiency diseases
- Malaria
- Immunization
- Reproductive Health, etc
Implemented activities (continuation)

Epidemiological studies undertaken on a basis of local health problems

- Malaria with regard to irrigated agriculture - 2007
- Helminths and Iodine Deficiency Diseases - 2009
- Prevalence of impaired glucose tolerance and diabetes, associated risk factors, and care: a rapid appraisal among ≥45 year old inhabitants of Khatlon oblast - 2012
Implemented activities (continuation)

Example: TB activities

- Actions to raise community awareness on TB:
  - Designing Informational Educational and Communicational materials on TB together with Republican Healthy Lifestyle Centre
  - Organizing Community Health Days and health promotion activities on TB among communities by Primary Health Care / Family Medicine services
  - Distribution of informational materials on TB
  - Role plays on TB
  - TB Expert Patients’ experience/Sharing experience with other community groups and with interested groups
Implemented activities (continuation)

Community groups together with Family Medicine providers on addressing TB issues among communities
Implemented activities (continuation)

Example: Iodine deficiency diseases prevention activities

- Actions to raise community awareness on consequences of iodine deficiency:
  - Dialogue and cooperation of PHC with endocrinology service of district
  - Health awareness campaigns on iodine deficiency diseases
  - Distribution of informational materials
  - Role plays by communities
  - Testing salt in households and selling-points by communities
  - Sharing experience with other community groups and with interested groups
Implemented activities (continuation)

Explanation on the need for iodised salt:
Interaction between PHC staff and the community group on testing salt, which used by communities
Implemented activities (continuation)
Role of Primary Health Care/Family Medicine services in health promotion activities

FM teams work collaboratively with their communities to address local health priorities. Their role could be seen in:

- Increasing the knowledge of communities about the need and importance of PHC/FM services
- Supporting the community groups in identifying, bringing forward health problems at local level and developing locally sensitive responses and generating solutions
- Providing the communities health information on identified health topics, focusing on prevention of diseases
- Improving the packages of provided primary health care/family medicine services
- Understanding that the communities are an important resource and partners in family medicine promotion and increase of health awareness increases the use of Family Medicine services
Conclusions / Summary
Conclusions / Summary

- Approach is ...
  - well-adopted, relatively cheap, allows to take up the demand
  - increasing the credibility of Family Medicine
  - offering sustainable solutions on a local level in the case accepted by and integrated into state structures

- Outlook ...
  - Integration of community empowerment aspects on health in the PHC business plans for transparency
  - Establish network of community groups at least in 75% village in pilot districts
  - Demonstrate the district community model and share the experience for further expansion
Thanks for your attention!