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PRIMARY PREVENTION OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE A FACILITATOR GUIDE

Department of Mental Health and Substance Dependence
Division for Operations and
Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health
World Health Organization
Geneva

Demand Reduction Section
Division for Operations and Analysis
United Nations International Drug Control Programme
Vienna

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HELPING PROJECT OPERATORS/ COMMUNITY MEMBERS LEARN

1. Introduction

Effective training is essential for community members and individuals supporting work on primary prevention of psychoactive substance abuse. Organised training provides an opportunity to learn specific knowledge and skills, and to acquire attitudes that are essential for carrying out such work effectively. This Facilitator Guide has been developed in order to make it easier to plan and implement the Workbook training course. The learning process structured in the Workbook for Project Operators should be supported by the input and efforts of the individual and the whole group (when in a group training setting).

1.1 How the Facilitator Guide relates to the Workbook

Ideally the Guide should be used hand-in-hand with the Workbook. The information provided in the Guide is designed to be consistent with and supplementary to the Workbook. You should feel free to make necessary adaptations to local conditions wherever possible. The Guide is meant to be used flexibly, in order to accommodate your own innovative ideas and cultural conditions. Each of the exercises in the Workbook is discussed and key learning points are highlighted. The noted exercise responses can be expanded upon and modified, as you relate the training material to the actual settings in which project operators will work. If you are using the Workbook as a self-training tool, the Guide provides useful supplementary information. The Guide makes the Workbook user-friendly, while also allowing it to be less bulky. This Guide can

also be useful for planning training related activities in the community. Thus the Guide can be used in either a group training course or as a complement to self-directed learning.

2. Principles of learning

Learning is an active and continuous process. It can be made easier when individuals are given an opportunity to practise what is being taught. Such opportunities should be offered in the place where learners will be working or under similar conditions. To facilitate learning, you can do the following:

2.1 Active involvement

Encourage individuals undergoing training to be actively involved. A variety of learning activities should be provided, which will enable learners to seek out information, ask questions, formulate responses, think critically and creatively and, apply their new knowledge, attitudes and skills. All activities should be tailored to the local situation.

2.2 Clarity

Use clear direct language, define new terms, demonstrate skills and use appropriate learning aids. Doing these things will enhance the comprehension and retention of what is being taught. It is necessary to use a local language that can readily be understood. All materials intended for use in the training must be adapted to the local context, with respect to language and content.

2.3 Mastery

Each time you begin a new topic, make sure that the previous topics are used as the basis for understanding the new knowledge and skills. Learning is ongoing and incremental. Those being trained should be able to build on what has been taught already, as a means of moving forward toward the next stage.

2.4 Feedback

Information about the standard of learning is essential. Praise what is being done well and correct errors as soon as they occur. This helps to focus the learner's efforts and enhance their future progress.

3. Individualising training

Treat each person in the training as a unique individual. People have different experiences, interests, abilities and learning styles. You will need to understand what they already know and use a variety of training methods to meet their needs. Extra motivation may be needed for some.

4. Training for roles and responsibilities

As you plan a training course, bear in mind the actual responsibilities that will be held by the project operators and community members whose training you are facilitating. Doing so will help create a training course that maximises learning. For example, some will be volunteers and some may have expanded roles (more than one role) in the project. The roles noted below mostly pertain to project operators. Other individuals participating in the project will have different roles. Their training needs should be identified and the training course matched to them.

4.1 Advocacy and networking

Advocating for primary prevention of substance abuse among young people means liaising with national projects/programmes and providing a link by facilitating implementation of projects. One needs to establish regular contact with relevant government and non-governmental agencies, by participating in meetings and giving full updates of activities at the local level. Advocacy also includes mobilising and organising communities to help prevent substance abuse; conducting community campaigns targeted at young people and important others, like teachers and parents and generally disseminating information about primary prevention.

4.2 Training

Training includes assessing the training needs of the target groups and planning and facilitating training courses and sessions on various issues related to substance use.

4.3 Problem/ needs assessment

This role entails participating in local situation assessments of the needs and risks among young people at the local level, writing project proposals and conducting monitoring and evaluating the project implementation.

4.4 Management

Management involves planning, organising, implementing and co-ordinating project and community activities, establishing and maintaining regular contact with community and youth groups, conducting field visits for the purpose of coordination and routine supervision of activities, budgeting for activities and preparing reports and other documentation.

5. Learning outcomes

At the beginning of each module there is a list of learning outcomes. These outcomes can be classified under three headings: **knowledge**, **skills** and **attitudes**. These outcomes provide a basis for determining the content of the training, the methods to use and for assessment of learning.

5.1 The knowledge outcomes

These are concerned with the project operators acquisition of facts, concepts and principles that are central to prevention of substance abuse, (for example, facts about types of substances, their use, effects and consequences, or facts about project development and situation assessment).

5.2 The skills outcomes

Skills outcomes relate to what an individual needs to be able to do in order to perform a task well. Some skills may be simple and straightforward. Others may require complex information processing and decision making. Some examples of skills introduced in the Workbook are: conducting a Focus Group Discussion or Key Informant Interview, project proposal writing, and developing questions for use in assessment.

5.3 Attitude outcomes

These concern feelings and behavioural tendencies that may affect the project operator's work performance. Some examples are feelings and perceptions about substance use efforts and commitment to community involvement and attitudes towards cultural norms and young people. Attitude outcomes are difficult to assess, as attitude formation takes a long time. Role play and discussions are a good way of gauging and imparting attitudes during training.

Studies have shown that people remember 20 % what they hear, 40 % what they hear and see, and 80 % what they discover for themselves. These knowledge, skills and attitude outcomes can be taught and fostered in a variety of ways, using many different types of training methods. Some of these methods are outlined in the next section.

6. Training methods

Training is a process which is intended to foster and enhance learning, and to build upon the knowledge, skills, attitudes and capacities that individuals have obtained through prior education. There are many methods you can employ to carry out training. The most effective methods are those that allow for maximum participation of those being trained. Selection of particular methods will depend largely on:

- What one plans to achieve (the desired outcomes); how many people will participate;
- How much knowledge the participants already have on the subject;
- How much time is available for the training;
- How much participation is expected from those being trained during sessions;
- What resources you have for the training.

Training courses should be adapted to the group and present situation. Below are common participatory training methods that you can use.

- Group discussions
- Demonstrations
- Field visits
- Games
- Role play/ drama
- Brainstorming
- Stories and songs
- Lecture method

6.1 Group discussion

When this method is used, those being trained end up doing more talking than the trainer/facilitator. This is because the trainees are given group tasks to complete. The group discussion method provides an opportunity for everybody to participate during the training. To ensure that this method is effective, the groups should be small (3-6 people), focused on a single topic and discussion time limited to a brief duration (20 minutes maximum). A recorder (to write down the results) and a presenter (to present them to the larger group) should be chosen within each small group.

6.2 Demonstration

A practical skill is presented by the facilitator or another person assisting with part of the training. A successful demonstration should also allow the trainees the opportunity to practise the skill themselves. For example, a demonstration of good communication skills or report writing could be offered. This method requires a lot of advance preparation. Further time should also be allowed for

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