

User Education and Hygiene Promotion Programme

Purpose of user education and hygiene promotion

- Address health risk behaviors with the provision of behavior specific knowledge and opportunities to practice the knowledge and skills. This reduces water-borne diseases like cholera, bilharzia, and so forth.
- It improves participation and ownership of the project by the community;
- It ensures proper maintenance of the toilet facilities by the household members.

Problem

The recent and past outbreaks of water borne related diseases like cholera are an indication of firstly the inadequate provision of water services but most importantly the critical role hygiene promotion and user education place where these services are provided. These outbreaks are an indication that construction of toilets alone cannot alleviate these diseases. Hygiene promotion and user education are aimed at addressing these problems through encouraging safe and appropriate hygienic practices in the community. Emphasis is therefore placed on understanding how diseases are transmitted and finding barriers to this.

Our approach

The Mvula Trust as non governmental organisation promotes the inclusion and participation of all in the development processes particularly in water and sanitation related issues. Hence, as a principle The Mvula Trust employs participatory methodologies in its work with communities because the methods stimulate in particular the involvement of women, men, children and other vulnerable groups in the development processes.

The use of these methodologies also ensures a broader involvement of other stakeholders in the sector for example, the Departments of Health, and the Environment unit in the Department of Water Affairs. This way of working ensures that there is a comprehensive way of addressing health and hygiene risks in the community but also promotes a linking together with already existing health and hygiene initiatives at community level like home-based care, antenatal clinic educational and so on.

Impact

To strengthen sector stakeholders' staff capacity to be effective in their water service provision role in order to deliver meaningful, appropriate and sustainable services to the communities they serve.

The programme will comprise the following:

- Status quo analysis: A study analysing work on the ground regarding user education and hygiene promotion
- Coordination fora: Focusing on strengthening the existing Sanitation Task Teams and other similar formations in promoting user education and hygiene promotion work
- Support to WSAs: Supporting WSAs in their roles and responsibilities' tasks in user education and hygiene promotion work
- Institutional and social development practitioners: Build or strengthen the capacity of practitioners in user education and hygiene promotion through training and other capacity building initiatives
- Community role-players: Given the invaluable role they play at a community level their capacity needs to be build or strengthened through training so that the work in user education and hygiene promotion is carried out effectively at a community level
- Disaster management emergencies: Providing services like a situation analysis study, record keeping services, training materials and training of response teams to hygiene related emergencies
- HIV/AIDS: The linking of water and HIV/AIDS is imperative for people working with those that are infected and affected therefore The Trust can highlight this work through provision of training materials and training in these areas.
- Training materials and programmes: The Mvula Trust can produce training materials that are accredited as well as develop other training packages like training needs assessments, skills programmes as well as the managing of learnerships

Some of The Mvula Trust projects in this regard include:

- **Business Partners in Development KwaZulu-Natal: DWAF, T. Sigwaza (2002)**
- Group for Environmental Monitoring:T. Mahape (2003)
- Learning Centred Approach: DWAF/DFID, T. Meso (2007)
- Gearing Up Sanitation Implementation Capacity” or the ‘Gear Up’ project: DWAF, T. Meso (2002 – 2006)