Women's Integrated Sexual Health (WISH) Programme for Results: independent verification, evidence, and learning

Social norms change video no. 2
Social norms programming checklist

**Use the social norms programming checklist to assess your activities**

These are ten approaches which successful norm shifting interventions often use. This tool is adapted from the work of the Learning Collaborative to Advance Norm Change, Georgetown University (<http://irh.org/measurement_2/>) (<https://irh.org/resource-library/getting-practical-tool/>). You can use this checklist to map your activities, see how many of the approaches you are using, and identify ways to strengthen your approach.

1. In the column headings, write a brief description of each of your activities, e.g., “radio dramas to promote couple communications”, or “peer mobilisation among young people”
2. Assess whether each of your activities uses the approach mentioned. For example, if your radio drama seeks to shift both individual attitudes and social expectations, put a cross in the first box as indicated.
3. When you have assessed all your activities, check whether any of the rows are completely blank – meaning you have no activities which use this approach.
4. Can you strengthen your activities by including this approach? Introduce a new activity? Or partner with another stakeholder who can fill this gap?

*The sample on the next page is filled in as an example. For the purpose of this exercise, just choose 2-3 activities to review. If you were doing this in reality, you would need to add extra columns to include all your activities.*

*This sample indicates that:*

* *The programme is engaging people at multiple levels and seeking whole community change;*
* *It is correcting misperceptions and providing safe spaces for discussion;*
* *There is a gap in working with role models and community leaders;*
* *The activities do not use diffusion to spread the new behaviour more widely among the community.*

*This programme might introduce a new stream of work with community leaders, or partner with another organisation who are already working with this group.*

*The programme might also capitalise on its small group work, by encouraging participants to spread new norms through diffusion in their social networks.*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *SAMPLE* | *S* | *Radio drama* | *Youth clinic*  | *Community Health Workers’ outreach* |
| **Programming approach** | **Description/ example** |  |  |  |
| 1. **Seek community-level change, to ensure new behaviour are widely accepted**
 | Shift individual attitudes *and* social expectations | X  | X  |  |
| 1. **Engage people at multiple levels: Individual, family, community and policy/ legal levels**
 | Interventions which only focus on individual/ family level may have limited impact if economic/ legal/ policy barriers remain |  | X  | X  |
| 1. **Correct misperceptions around harmful behaviours**
 | E.g., Provide accurate information about side effects and effectiveness of modern family planning; and correct misperceptions if people believe harmful behaviours are more common than they really are. E.g., if people believe most husbands forbid their wives from using modern FP when this is not actually true | X  | X  |  |
| 1. **Root the desired change within the communities’ own cultural values**
 | Do not criticise people’s cultures or beliefs. Rather, demonstrate that the new behaviour is in line with community values | X  |  |  |
| 1. **Identify which reference groups are most influential**
 | You need to involve and persuade those who maintain the norms, such as religious and traditional leaders |  |  |  |
| 1. **Create safe spaces and leverage existing spaces for critical reflection among community members**
 | Community level reflection, often in small groups, is important for people to identify the negative consequences of harmful norms and to change their attitudes and expectations |  | X | x  |
| 1. **Confront power imbalance relating to gender and age**
 | Young women seeking family planning services may face power imbalances with disapproving service providers or parents. |  | X  |  |
| 1. **Promote the new norm through role models or opinion leaders**
 | Testimonials from influential, respected individuals can promote the new behaviour, and show how to put the new behaviour into practice |  |  |  |
| 1. **Use “organised diffusion” to spread positive behaviours**
 | Start with critical reflection to change norms within a core group first. This group can then engage others to have community-level impact. |  |  |  |
| 1. **Create positive new norms, rather than criticising negative behaviour**
 | Create new, shared beliefs when harmful norms have strong support within groups. While it is common to focus on negative consequences of a behaviour, this can unintentionally reinforce that behaviour by making it seem widespread. | X  |  |  |