

School Health Promotion

Behavior patterns are established during childhood, with important implications on the short and long term health and well being of children. Targeting students directly enables them to practice healthy behaviors and indirectly engages them in delivering messages to the community.

Schools are ideal settings for health promotion during early ages and have multiple benefits resulting in sustained behavior change. Interventions focused mainly on prevention, have both educational and health gains and can be cost effective.

Communication for Health, as part of its social mobilization intervention, and working with local implementing partners, has begun supporting selected second cycle primary schools. The overall aim is to create a supporting environment that engages and enables students to engrain healthy practices and be agents of change delivering messages to their families and communities. The project's support includes communication materials for health days and guidance for effective dissemination of health information through school clubs.

Some health areas are more relevant to school settings due to the risk factors and behavioral determinants that contribute to related negative outcomes. These include; Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WaSH), Nutrition, Malaria, Tuberculosis (TB), and adolescent Reproductive Health (RH).

Strengthening School Clubs

Most schools have clubs dedicated to health focus areas, academic subjects or recreation, and tend to involve both students and teachers. The clubs are most often in need of new ideas and content and can be incentivized and inspired to be more active. In order to strengthen school clubs *Communication for Health* provides them with;

- Print and electronic materials; including fliers, fact sheets, audio spots (where mini-media is available)
- Suggested health day interventions and activities for different health areas
- Link school health activities with PHCU/ HEWs: Give them Tool kits and discussion guides on how to form, guide and motivate school health clubs

Supporting Health Days

Celebrating and promoting health days is an opportunity to increase awareness on specific health issues, and improving health-seeking behaviors among students and members of the wider community. *Communications for Health* has put together a generic year round plan to reach 700-900 second cycle primary schools by September 2017 with proposed areas of focus for each month, along with proposed appropriate activities for school settings. The plan is included in the school kit that will be distributed to school heads and clubs.



When School Health is Promoted
EVERYONE GAINS!

Children
Nation Schools HEWs
Communities
Parents