

Local Knowledge in Health Promotion – a gender-sensitive approach



Gabriella Sozanski

NGO Alliance for Health Promotion



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Why Local Wisdom?

- A missing link in primary health care
- Increased relevance in crises
 - viable and sustainable solutions
 - cost-effective
 - build on self-help
 - empowers communities and women
 - enhances capacities of the poor
 - better control of their life



Context

Health promotion

is the process of enabling people

- to increase control over and
- to improve their health.



Positive Health

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”.

Constitution of WHO as adopted by the International Health Conference, New York, June 1946, signed on 22 July 1946 by the representatives of 61 States and entered into force on 7 April 1948



Salutogenesis – “The birth of health”

The study of Health Promotion

as opposed to

The study of Disease - traditional pathogenic model

Prof. Aron Antonovsky



Rationale

« When others decide everything for us - when they set the task, formulate the rules, and manage the outcome – and we have no say in the matter, we are reduced to objects. A world thus experienced as being indifferent to what we do, comes to be seen as a world devoid of meaning.» (A. Antonovsky)



The urgency of Health Promotion

- Health promotion has never been more timely or more needed.
- Gaps in implementation
- The power of health to drive socio-economic progress was reflected in the Millennium Development Declaration and its Goals



What is Local Knowledge?

A working definition:

Local Wisdom is a dynamic knowledge resource held, evolved and transmitted by a defined population and integrated with their understanding of surrounding nature and culture.



NGO Alliance for Health Promotion

Mission

To promote the health and development of all people by strengthening advocacy, developing partnerships, generating and sharing knowledge and thus, building a collective NGO voice.

www.ngos4healthpromotion.net



The LK Project of the Alliance

- Focus on women's empowerment
- Rights of women
- Local Knowledge manifest in
 - struggle against harmful practices and
 - encouraging beneficial practices



Research

- Function of development research: generate new knowledge incl. Local Knowledge
- Local ownership - *a conditio sine qua non*

Gap:

- Current research: from North to South
- Community members, particularly women – weakest link in the research process



Values of Local Knowledge

- Simple but often elaborate, comprehensive, diverse
- Oral in nature
- Adapted to local, cultural and environmental conditions
- Dynamic and flexible
- Tuned to needs of local people
- Corresponds with quality and quantity of available resources
- Copes well with changes



Types of Local Knowledge

Local Wisdom Impact	+ Positive	- Negative
Issues Approach	Traditional Medicine and Beliefs; Health Food and Water; Health Education and Communication	
Population-Based Approach	Women's Health; Youth; Rural	
Settings Approach	Community	



Local science vs Global science

- Series of essays argue for treating local and global science as culturally equal
- Diversity of knowledge systems demand respect
- Acknowledging both strengths and weaknesses and opportunities for further synergistic interaction
- Participatory development will facilitate more successful interventions (Paul Sillitoe, 2007)



Local Knowledge & Development

- Development has too often failed to deliver on its promises to poor nations.
- Policies imposed from above
- Search for alternative approaches
- Indigenous knowledge aims to make local voices heard more effectively.
- Acknowledged in development context
- To be validated by anthropologists



Resolution on Primary Health Care

- Urges member states to put people at the centre of health care
- Provide comprehensive primary health care services, including health promotion
- To promote active participation by all people, and reemphasize the empowering of communities, especially women... in order to support the renewal of primary health care.



Entry points for NGOs

“Today, the gaps in health outcomes are greater than ever before in recent history.”

“The values and approaches of primary health care – of equity, prevention, multisectoral action, and self-help as the best help – were pushed aside in many policy decisions.”

Dr. Margaret Chan, 13 Feb 2009



Social Determinants of Health

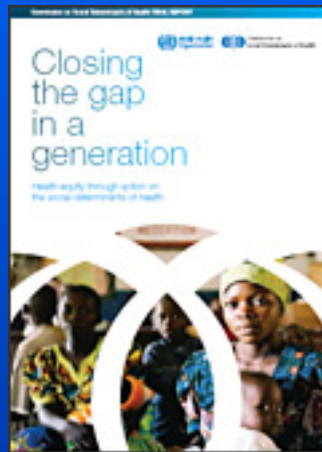
“Civil society groups are powerful protagonists in the global health equity agenda”

“Civil society plays a key role as a complementary force to government action to crack the root causes of health inequity in what has been described as the “nutcracker” effect.”

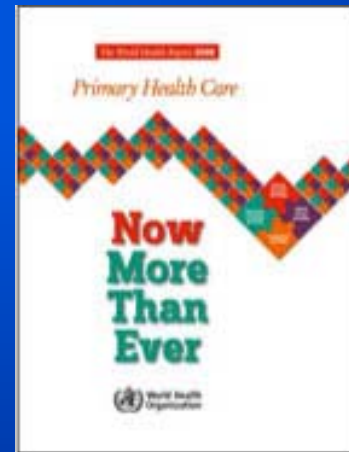
WHO Commission's Report



Three Faces, One Philosophy



SDH



PHC



HPR



Promoting Health and Development

Closing the Implementation Gap

7th Global Conference on
Health Promotion

Nairobi, Kenya

October 26-30, 2009



Five Tracks of the Global Conference

- Community Empowerment
- Health Literacy
- Strengthening Health Systems
- Intersectoral Action
- Capacity for Health Promotion



WHO | 7th Global Conference on Health Promotion - Mozilla Firefox

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Promoting health and development: closing the implementation gap

7th Global Conference on Health Promotion organized by WHO and Kenya Ministry of Public Health will be held in Nairobi, 26-30 October 2009. It is the latest in the series, which began in Ottawa in 1986 and produced the Ottawa Charter on Health Promotion. The benchmark conference was followed by Adelaide in 1988, Sundsvall 1991, Jakarta 1997, Mexico-City 2000 and Bangkok 2005.

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The urgency of health promotion

Health and development today face unprecedented threats. The financial crisis threatens the viability of national economies in general and of health systems in particular. Global warming and climate change exert a toll in human life, especially in lower income countries. Security threats create a sense of shared uncertainty for communities around the world.

In this context, health promotion has never been more timely or more needed. Over the period from the Ottawa Conference through the six global conferences to Bangkok, a large body of evidence and experience has accumulated about the importance of health promotion as an



26-30 October 2009
Nairobi, Kenya
[7th Global Conference on Health Promotion](#)

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[Conference organizing structures \[pdf 91kb\]](#)

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Maximise effectiveness

- Examples of community empowerment
- Scaling up successful LK practices
- Enhancing the capacity of NGOs to develop, share and apply LK systems
- Developing innovative tools for the validation and protection of LK
- Promoting a global NGO dialogue



Recommendations

- Make decision-makers and policy-makers recognise the value of Local Knowledge and the advantages of working with NGOs in the interest of closing the Health implementation gap
- Enhance the recognition of LK by Civil Society and encourage their building on LK in health promotion activities
- Advocate for the competitive advantage Civil Society provides in achieving health outcomes