
Introduction

UNICEF was one of the first organizations to practice and advocate for addressing both behavioral and social change as a means for decreasing maternal, newborn, and child morbidity and mortality, and improving maternal and child survival rates around the world. UNICEF has a Communication for Development (C4D) Section that integrates behavioral and social change approaches into UNICEF programs throughout the developing world.

UNICEF uses the Social Ecological Model (SEM) as a framework for strategic program planning. This framework enables program managers and planners to assess barriers and opportunities for behavior and social change among individuals, households, communities, organizations, and in the policy environment. The analysis of barriers and opportunities at these multiple levels of a social system informs the type of C4D approach that is best suited to affecting positive impacts at each level.

The purpose for this Communication Strategy Development Guide for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health Programs Around the World is to provide evidence-based, practical guidance for designing communication for development (C4D) strategic program plans whose implementation will result in direct positive changes in MNCH indicators and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for 2015 and beyond, as well as A Promise Renewed, a vision of ending preventable child deaths by 2035 initiated by UNICEF, USAID, and the governments of India and Ethiopia.

This Guide has been conceived as a step-by-step tool for MNCH program managers, program planners, and communication specialists to use when conceptualizing, writing, implementing and assessing their programs. The Guide consists of Modules that address the various steps in developing a communication for development strategy, with an example of how to develop a strategy for MNCH programs. Module 1 provides a description of (1) the Social Ecological Model (SEM), a framework for understanding the multiple levels of a social system and interactions between individuals and environment within this system, and (2) a model of the communication for development (C4D) approach. The importance of identifying and incorporating social norms into program planning is also discussed. Module 2 presents the steps in developing a C4D strategy for health behavior and social change programs, and discusses the application of Monitoring for Equity Systems (MoRES) Framework. Module 3 illustrates the steps in developing a C4D strategy specifically for MNCH programs.
The Guide layout is designed for online computer use. Each Module can be accessed via the Internet as a downloadable document. Each Module contains hyperlinks that connect the user to supplemental documents that provide further explanation and/or examples of the concepts described in that Module.

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