

# MANAGING PROGRAMMES TO IMPROVE CHILD HEALTH

## MODULE 1

# Introduction



World Health  
Organization

## WHO Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

### Managing Programmes to Improve Child Health

Contents: Introduction -- Planning Implementation -- Managing Implementation -- Workbook -- Facilitator Guide.

1.Child welfare. 2.Child. 3.Infant mortality. 4.Child health services. 5.Program development. 6.Teaching materials. I.World Health Organization. Dept. of Child and Adolescent Health and Development.

ISBN 978 92 4 159872 9

(NLM classification: WA 320)

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Printed by the WHO Document Production Services, Geneva, Switzerland

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## Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ANC	Antenatal care
ARI	Acute respiratory infection
ART	Antiretroviral therapy
ARV	Antiretroviral
CAH	Child and Adolescent Health and Development
CHW	Community health worker
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
EBF	Exclusive breastfeeding
EPI	Expanded Programme on Immunization
ETAT	Emergency triage, assessment and treatment
Hib	Haemophilus influenzae Type B
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HMIS	Health management information system
IMCI	Integrated Management of Childhood Illness
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
IPT	Intermittent preventive therapy
ITN	Insecticide-treated bednets
IRIS	Immune reconstitution inflammatory syndrome
IYCF	Infant and young child feeding
LBW	Low-birth-weight
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MNCH-HHS	Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health – Household Survey
MOH	Ministry of Health
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
ORS	Oral rehydration solution
ORT	Oral rehydration therapy
PMTCT	Prevention of mother-to-child transmission (of HIV)
SBA	Skilled birth attendant
SPA	Service Provision Assessment
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

## **Acknowledgements**

This training course has been prepared by the World Health Organization Department of Child and Adolescent Health and Development. The Department is grateful to Dr John Clements and Dr John Murray (independent consultants), Professor John Hubley (Leeds Metropolitan University, Leeds, UK), Professor Shan Naidoo and Professor Haroon Saloojee (University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, SA) for having drafted individual sections. The first consolidated draft was prepared by Dr John Murray; Ms Patricia Whitesell Shirey (ACT International, Atlanta, Georgia, USA) provided the instructional design and led the development of the training modules.

The development of the training course was led by WHO staff Samira Aboubaker, Rajiv Bahl, Teshome Desta, and Charles Sagoe Moses. Other WHO staff who provided significant input include Frits de Haan, Phaniel Habimana, Tigest Ketsela, Thierry Lambrechts, Elizabeth Mason, Evariste Mutabaruka, Robert Scherpbier, Karen Stenberg, Marianna Trias and Cathy Wolfheim. Dr Doyin Oluwole (Africa 2010, Washington, DC), Dr Jane Briggs (Management Sciences for Health, Boston, USA) and Dr Laura Hawken (WHO), served as reviewers and are gratefully acknowledged.

Interim versions of the training course were field-tested at intercountry workshops in the Western Pacific Region (Cambodia and Philippines), the African Region (Ghana), and at WHO/HQ. The comments and suggestions provided by participants at these workshops have been used to refine and improve the materials.

# Introduction

## *Managing programmes to improve child health*

Child health interventions are treatments, technologies, and key family practices that prevent or treat childhood illness and reduce deaths in children under age 5 years. There are simple low-cost interventions for the prevention and treatment of all the most common causes of newborn, infant and child mortality. An effective child health programme must focus on achieving a high level of coverage<sup>1</sup> with the interventions that have the greatest potential to reduce child mortality in the country.

At the national level, child health programme management and partners should select the most important child health interventions to implement in the country. This selection should be based on consideration of the primary causes of morbidity and mortality in the country and the feasibility of implementing different interventions there.

Child health programme managers at the other administrative levels, such as the region (or province), sub-region, and district, must understand the child survival problems in their area and the framework specified in the country's strategic plan for child health. They must then plan to implement the selected interventions for child health in a way that will be effective in their administrative areas, manage that implementation on an ongoing basis, and periodically evaluate what has been achieved.

Managing programmes to improve child health is an ongoing cycle for every country, carried out in somewhat different ways at different management levels. The overall programme planning and management cycle has two parts, the strategic planning cycle and the implementation planning cycle.

Figure 1 on the next page shows the parts of the overall programme planning and management cycle. The boxes in dotted lines show the **strategic planning cycle**. The strategic planning cycle includes an evaluation of current coverage with child health interventions and child health status (the impact of efforts in the previous years). Based on this thorough evaluation, a strategic plan will be developed to guide the child health programme in the next 5 to 10 years. The plan will set goals, specify the priority child health interventions, and outline how they should be packaged and delivered.

**Strategic planning** is usually done at the national level every 5 to 10 years and is sometimes done at regional or other levels also. Strategic plans are used to ensure commitment of stakeholders and to advocate for programme resources. They provide overall guidance for implementation and financing to ensure the achievement of the goals. A strategic plan provides the framework for developing implementation plans.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Coverage is the proportion of the target population that receives the intervention. It is a population-based indicator, usually measured in a community/household survey.

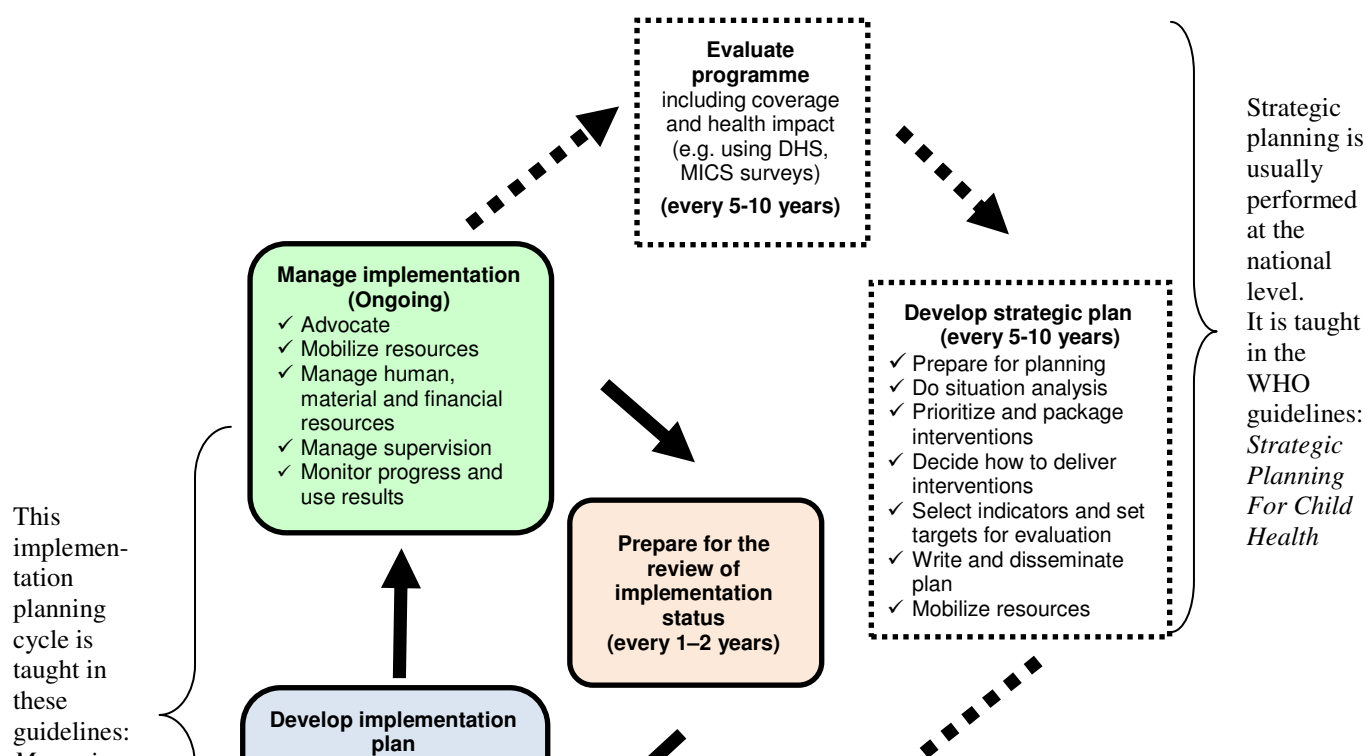
<sup>2</sup> Strategic planning is not discussed in detail in these guidelines. Detailed guidelines on strategic planning will be presented in a separate manual: "Strategic Planning for Child Health: Workshop Guidelines" currently in development by WHO/CAH.

The **implementation planning cycle**, in shaded boxes, includes planning how the interventions will be implemented, managing implementation on an ongoing basis, and after 1-2 years of activity, reviewing how well implementation was carried out. Then the cycle repeats, beginning with using the results of the review to inform planning for the next year.

**Planning implementation** helps managers at the national and sub-national levels work out how the interventions can be effectively delivered and what activities and resources will be required. It is usually done every 1 to 2 years. If a strategic plan is available, it states the objectives for child health and the priority interventions to be implemented and thereby provides the framework for the implementation (operational) plans. If a strategic plan has not been developed, it is still necessary to do implementation planning to manage the child health programme in the short term.

Figure 1

### Programme Planning and Management Cycle



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