Health promotion and the social determinants of health

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Broad determinants of health

- A number of factors (usually called broad determinants) underlie many health conditions, diseases and disabilities:
  1. These may be biological, environmental (physical), or economic and/or
  2. Socially based -literacy, income, family/community organization, leadership, cultural/religious
- The factors influence risks to health, health related behaviours and policies as well as investment in health services
Goals of health promotion in WHO

- Reduce risks to health and improve healthy lifestyles, policies and actions that address the broad determinants of health
- Promote increased social support for and investment in health and,
- Promote equity in use of health resources
Basic health promotion responses to the broad determinants of health

- Knowledge and skills development
- Mitigation of competing interests in society
- Advocacy for health
- Empowerment for healthy behaviour
- Creation of conditions that support healthy behaviour including re-orientation of health services
- Mobilization of resources and social support for health services and development
Health promotion in AFRO

- A comprehensive, priority programme
- Cuts-across and supports other programmes
- Regional strategy approved in 2001
- WHO/AFRO supporting strengthening of HP capacity in countries
- Involves mobilization of conventional health sector and new players for health action (e.g. education, social service, planning, law enforcement)
Key HP principles that guide HP interventions:

- The pre-requisites for health include Peace, social justice, respect for human rights, and equity.
- Health is a resource for development and development supports health development—poverty reduction is a central concern in health.
- Health development requires actions within and beyond the health sector.
- Participation is central to success in health development.
HP interventions that address social determinants - (settings)

- Health promoting school Initiative
- Over 30 countries involved
- In-school health education, and referral ensure access to services by all children
- Pupils/teachers identify neglected families and inform health workers
- Schools work with communities to reach poor, marginalized families – housing, nutrition)
HP interventions that address social determinants (populations)

- APADOC
  - Focuses on HIV/AIDS but other issues-drugs, alcohol, poor diet
  - Mobilizes youth, parents and communities to address factors that influence youth responses to these problems
    1. Peer education=Information and skills to all participating youth
    2. Life skills education= facilitate access to services
    3. Alliance=management of stigma, discrimination and exclusion
HP interventions that address social determinants - (issues)

- EAR, IMCI, MAL, RPA, TUB, and VPD, programmes planning joint, integrated interventions
- Integration of issues and approaches to ensure better outreach
- Partnership of communities, health and other players shall ensure:
  1. Coordinated policy development,
  2. Effective handling of stigma, discrimination, and marginalization
  3. Better use of resources and services
  4. Active community involvement in health
Challenges

- HP principles, methodology and process suitable for facilitating effective responses to social (and other health determinants)
- Two main challenges exist:
  1. To ensure health promotion is fully integrated in health policies and programmes
  2. Facilitate involvement of new players in health action