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**SUSTAINABLE WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES
FOR ALL IN A FAST CHANGING WORLD**

**Developing a cohesive theme for a programmatic
behaviour change strategy**

M. Savath, R. Cantwell, M. MacLeod & S. Chee, Cambodia

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While it is commonly accepted that water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) programming should include both hardware and software components, these two elements are usually unintegrated because they are not conceived as a whole. Program implementers often choose to prioritize the hardware component as the sole deliverable of a program, and fail to see the uptake of software-related practices as critical for sustained health impact. Through a participatory and iterative process, Samaritan's Purse and Clear Cambodia have developed a single cohesive theme that encapsulates the three key messages of their household water program: drinking treated water, hand-washing with soap, and practicing safe sanitation. This focused intentional effort to clarify the messages of the program forms the basis of a programmatic behaviour change strategy. This approach is applicable and adaptable for a variety of behaviour change interventions and across numerous geographic contexts.

Background

Samaritan's Purse, in partnership with Clear Cambodia, has been implementing a household water program (HWP) for over a decade. The program aims to foster sustainable improvements in the quality of life and health in rural villages that lack basic water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) access. The purpose of the program is to foster improved behaviours in three core areas: drinking treated water from a filter, washing hands with soap, and practicing safe sanitation (Dyck et al. 2009).

To encourage lasting positive behaviour change in these three core areas the program integrates a balance of hardware and software components. The HWP encompasses community-based education on health, hygiene, and sanitation issues, in addition to participatory implementation and usage of the BioSand Water Filter (BSF) among households. While there has been significant success with the hardware aspect of the program, building ownership, and seeing continued usage of the BSF, it was recognized that improvements could be made to the software component to foster sustained practices around hand-washing with soap and safe sanitation.

In taking a comprehensive look at the software aspect of the program (village promotion meetings, health and hygiene trainings, and household monitoring visits), a Cambodia-based consultancy group was retained to recommend a systemic approach in how program staff interact with rural village members. A holistic review of the program was undertaken and led to the recommendation to create and adapt a single cohesive theme or 'Big Idea' that would unify the program's three core areas in style, tone, and approach.

Approach

A 'Big Idea' for the program should be broad enough to easily address all three of the core program areas. The methodology used for this process of generating ideas combined the knowledge of the program staff with information from field tests conducted with rural Cambodian villagers.

Generating ideas

During the brainstorming process, program staff can tend to be reluctant to suggest ideas that may be considered frivolous or unconstructive, and that restraint limits the potential of new ideas. As a way to

encourage program staff to push the boundaries towards new ideas, an external facilitator specializing in creative thinking was brought in to help guide the brainstorming process. The program staff were led through a number of warm-up exercises in the practice of divergent thinking (Figure 1).

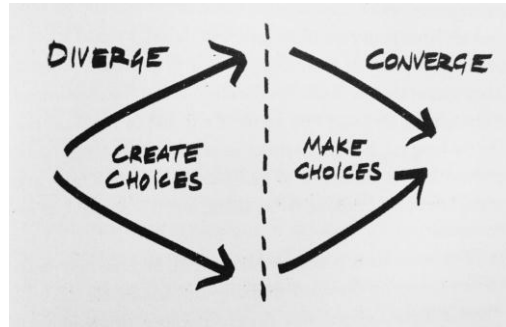


Figure 1. Divergent and convergent thinking

Source: *Change by Design* - Brown 2009

Using this method of generating ideas, the program staff were encouraged to suggest any and all ideas they could think of, to refrain from passing judgment on other ideas, and to build off each other's ideas. By setting up these guidelines around the process, the program staff felt empowered to fully participate and come up with ideas. This led to the creation and cultivation of many more ideas than in past brainstorming exercises (Photograph 1).



Photograph 1. Organizing ideas

Field test with target audience

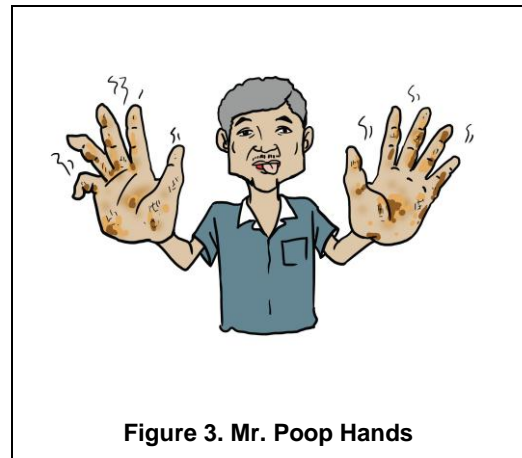
The SUCCES framework outlined in Table 1 (Heath 2007) was employed to assist the program staff while contemplating concepts that could be considered for the 'Big Idea'. The framework highlights six principles that are commonly found in effective behaviour change messaging.

Table 1. SUCCES Framework	
Simple	Be clear and direct
Unexpected	Utilize knowledge gaps
Credible	Help people believe
Concrete	Come from a trusted source
Emotion	Make people care
Story	Stimulate interest and inspiration

These principles were used as guidelines during the convergent thinking process to evaluate the generated ideas. The evaluation included grouping the ideas by theme and then applying the SUCCES framework to the most appropriate ideas before building and improving on those. The final shortlist was further refined and then prepared for field-testing. Two concepts were selected to be field-tested with rural Cambodian villagers, the target audience for the program:

- Fly Family – Villagers live in such an unhygienic manner that a giant fly family moves in and takes over
- Mr. Poop Hands – No one in the village likes Mr. Poop Hands, a man who does not wash his hands after defecation

The two ideas stemmed from the question: “What would the exaggerated impact be of unhygienic behaviours?” Both ideas were visually storyboarded (Figures 2 and 3) and then sent out with program staff with the instructions to show the storyboards to different village members and solicit feedback. The feedback sought was on the ease of understanding the idea, what thoughts and emotions the ideas elicited, and whether or not the respondent found the idea interesting.



In reviewing the results from field-testing, it was clear that neither of the two ideas were particularly strong. One of the storyboarded ideas was not drawn clearly enough and stimulated discussions around malaria rather than on WASH behaviours. After further reflection, it was decided to conduct the idea generating process again, in hopes of refining the current ideas or generating a new idea. In the following process, a new idea called the Chan Family was developed and showed positive results during subsequent field-testing.

The Chan Family

The Chan Family (Figure 4) is an example of a typical rural Cambodian household. Activity tools and information, education, and communication (IEC) materials will utilize characters from the family, showing that positive hygiene behaviours are achievable (Figure 5).



Figure 4. The Chan Family

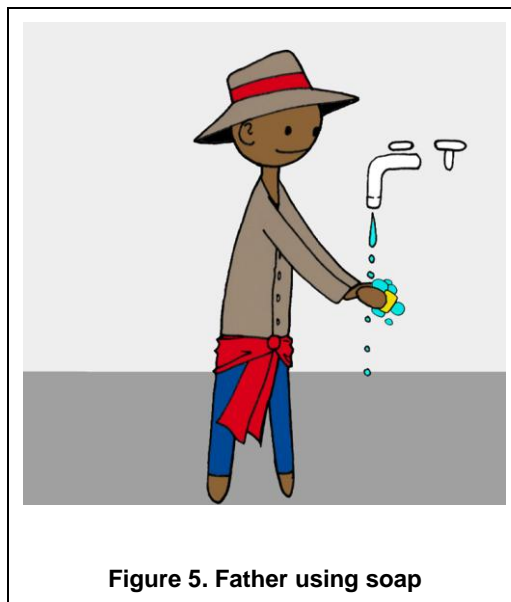


Figure 5. Father using soap

The family becomes an example of an aspirational goal for the target audience, as they enjoy good health and increased income due to their uptake of positive WASH behaviours. With multiple members of the family available to be used in materials, this has the added benefit of targeted messaging. For example, plans are being developed to integrate school-age children from the Chan Family into the curriculum of a concurrently implemented school WASH program. In this case, a phased message approach can be used where students at school are first introduced to the younger members of the Chan Family and the positive behaviour messaging. Then with the HWP implementation, the parents and grandparents are introduced to the Chan Family, with the children providing support to their parents based on the messaging they have already received from the school WASH program.

Prototyping of tools

The IEC materials that have been used in the HWP to date are an amalgamation of different sources compiled over the years. The current IEC materials were analyzed to see how the concept of the Chan Family could be integrated to achieve consistent messaging for the target audience. As well, several new activities were created to take advantage of the Chan Family concept. Both the adapted IEC materials and the new activities were field-tested by the program staff and are now in an on-going process of further refining the messaging. As the tools and materials are being integrated by the program staff, a Trainer of Trainers guide for each of the program staff is being developed. The purpose of these documents is to give guidance on the goals of each training and interaction with the rural villagers and on how to best to utilize the Chan Family.

Lessons learned

- Many of the existing IEC materials have been collected and compiled from a variety of sources over time. The process of developing a single cohesive theme for the HWP has highlighted that the messaging in the current materials is not clear for the target audience. Moving forward, it is important that the various materials and tools have consistent messaging. In addition, Trainer of Trainers guides will assist the staff in achieving consistency in each household interaction.
- While the development of the Chan Family concept and its adaptation into the current program is a considerable endeavour, this has not resulted in a full upheaval in program planning or implementation. Engaging with the staff throughout the process of generating ideas has allowed Clear Cambodia to

leverage staff skills and knowledge and helped facilitate the further development of program implementation without having to introduce a completely new approach.

- Involving the program staff from the initial stages has helped capture their interest and ensure buy-in of the new Chan Family concept and materials.

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Contact details

Savath Mao
Clear Cambodia
#86 st 608
Boeng Kak 2, Toul Kork
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Tel: +855 12 910 536
Email: mao.savath@clearcambodia.org
[www:www.clearcambodia.org](http://www.clearcambodia.org)

Ray Cantwell
Samaritan's Purse
20 Hopewell Way NE
Calgary, AB T3J 5H5 Canada
Tel: +1 800 663 6500
Email: rcantwell@samaritan.ca
[www: www.samaritanspurse.ca](http://www.samaritanspurse.ca)