

# Glossary

The definitions included in this glossary are intended solely for use with this publication; they may not necessarily be applicable in another context.

Activity	A group of tasks with a common purpose.
Allocation	The assignment of a share of funds and other resources to a definite purpose, programme or activity.
Assignment	Distribution of tasks and responsibilities to staff (in a health team).
Assessment	Identification and analysis of factors that may explain evaluation findings.
Attitude	General tendency of an individual to act in a certain way under certain conditions.
Authority	The power or right to make decisions and to enforce them when necessary.
Budget	A detailed estimate of the cost of a programme during a specific period. The amount of funds at the disposal of a programme.
Capital expenditure	Funds expended on permanent or durable goods (e.g. buildings, equipment).
Checklist	A list of items to be checked one by one, to ensure that none is omitted.
Communication	The transmission of information from one individual or group, by any means, to another individual or group.
Community	Individuals and groups living and interacting within certain boundaries (e.g. physical, cultural).
Competence	The professional ability required to carry out a task. Competencies are clusters of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to the performance of a task or activity.
Constraint	Restriction or limitation of freedom. See <i>limitation</i> and <i>obstacle</i> .
Control	The process of verifying programme implementation, and of correcting factors that may prevent the programme from achieving its defined goals.

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Coordination	The process of bringing the activities of different persons into relation with one another so as to achieve a common goal.
Cost	Resources expended in carrying out activities, including capital (or fixed) costs and recurrent (or operating) costs.
Coverage	Proportion of an eligible population receiving a stated service, or any service.
Criterion (plural: criteria)	Standard according to which something is judged or a decision is made.
Data	Elements of information, usually unprocessed.
Decision	A choice made between two or more alternatives.
Delegation (of authority)	The action of a person in entrusting authority, for a specific purpose, to another person.
Development	The economic growth of a society together with social improvements (for example, in health, education, and housing).
Discrepancy	A difference between what is found and what is expected.
Effectiveness	A measure of the degree of attainment of predetermined objectives.
Efficiency	A measure of how economically resources are utilized to achieve predetermined objectives.
Evaluation	A judgement of value, based on observation or measurement or examination — for instance, the extent to which a programme has been effective and efficient.
Facilities	Buildings and equipment (such as health centres, hospitals, laboratories).
Feedback	The flow of information back from one stage in a cycle or process or system to a preceding stage, as a basis for further development.
Function	A group of activities with a common purpose.
Functional chart	A chart showing functions and lines of authority and communication within an organization. (Also called <i>organizational chart</i> .)

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Goal	The intended end-result or achievement of a programme or activity.
Guidelines	Suggestions as to how to proceed in implementing planned activities.
Health problem	A departure from accepted norms in the health status of a community; sometimes also an underlying cause of such a departure.
Health services	A system of institutions, people, technologies and resources designed to improve the health status of a population. Also: the services provided to the population (e.g. preventive, promotional, curative, etc.).
Health status	The degree to which the health of a specified population meets accepted norms (of mortality, morbidity, impairment, etc.).
Health system	The set of factors (economic, social, cultural, political), including the health services, that determine the health status of a population at any time.
Implementation	Putting a programme into action; doing the work.
Incentive	Something that encourages a person to take action.
Incidence (rate)	The number of new cases (of a disease), as a proportion of the total population or of the population at risk, in a year or any given period.
Indicator	A measurable variable for indicating directly or indirectly changes in status, effectiveness, efficiency or work progress.
Information	Data processed for a purpose (e.g. decision-making).
Information system	A group of people, procedures, methods and perhaps machines and other equipment, for the collection, processing, storage, and retrieval of information.
Input	What goes into implementing an activity, i.e. people, information, resources, time.
Inventory	List of items.

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Job description	A statement of activities and tasks assigned to a staff member. (See <i>post description</i> .)
Leadership	Art of influencing, guiding and managing effectively.
Learning objective	What a learner should be able to do after, and as a result of, the learning process, which he or she could not do before.
Limitation	A deficiency of a necessary resource (personnel, materials, money).
Management	“Getting things done”. Management includes planning, organizing, directing, monitoring and control, supervision and evaluation.
Monitoring	Observing, measuring and recording the way activities are being implemented. Monitoring leads to control.
Motivation	A drive that impels an individual to make an effort and take action.
Needs	Felt needs: needs recognized by an individual or a community. Real needs: needs recognized as a result of a professional or technical survey.
Norm	Authoritative standard or model; the expected amount of work to be done; typical pattern of behaviour of a group. (See: <i>standard</i> ).
Objective	The planned or intended result of a programme or activity.
Obstacle	A difficulty, other than a resource limitation, that hampers the implementation of an activity.
Organization	The pattern of responsibilities, accountability, authority and communication in a group of people pursuing a common goal.
Output	The product of an activity or programme. In health work the output is a health care service (e.g. immunization).
Performance	The actual output and quality of work performed.
Plan	A statement of goals, objectives and outputs, and a description of the courses of action and the resources necessary to achieve them.

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Post description	A statement of functions, responsibilities, accountability and authority assigned to a person occupying a post; it includes a job description. (See <i>job description</i> .)
Primary health care	Essential health care, accessible at affordable cost to the community and the country, based on practical, scientifically sound and socially acceptable methods. It includes at least eight components: health education, proper nutrition, basic sanitation, maternal and child health care, immunization, control of common diseases and injuries, prevention of local endemic diseases, essential drugs.
Priority	A preferential rating that indicates importance or urgency, according to given criteria.
Profile	The qualities, capacities, and experience needed by a person to carry out a specific function.
Programme	A set of interrelated activities, in time sequence, and a statement of personnel and other resources required, directed towards achieving a stated goal or objective.
Progress	Actual implementation compared with scheduled implementation.
Qualification	Evidence of completed training or successful examination in relation to a job.
Resources	The means (personnel, materials, money) required for the implementation of a programme or activity.
Responsibility	A function, activity or task for which one is liable to account; a duty assigned to a staff member.
Role	The behaviour expected from someone in a particular status.
Sample	A subset of a population, representative of the total population, used for estimating some property or properties of the population as a whole.
Standard	An accepted criterion for judging performance: frequently qualitative. (See <i>norm</i> , <i>criterion</i> .)
Strategy	A broad approach to achieving goals, within which programmes may be formulated.

Supervision	A way of ensuring staff competence, effectiveness and efficiency, through observation, discussion, support and guidance.
Target	A statement of a measurable output related to a certain population and a certain time.
Task	Work to be performed within a certain time; an element of an activity.