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ILO-4 Teachers' manual – “Brainwriting”-Tool for the topic: “Barriers and Facilitators to Health Literacy and Digital Health Literacy”

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Method Description: Brainwriting

Topic:

Barriers and Facilitators of Health Literacy and Digital Health Literacy

Objective:

To systematically collect diverse perspectives and ideas regarding the challenges and supportive factors in accessing, understanding, and using health information and digital health services.

Detailed description of the method:

Brainwriting is a structured technique for generating ideas that is used in groups and is particularly well suited for identifying a variety of perspectives and solutions to a specific topic. Unlike traditional brainstorming, brainwriting does not involve verbal communication during the idea generation phase. This creates a relaxed atmosphere in which all participants have the same opportunity to contribute, regardless of their communication style or status in the group.

The core principle is that participants write their ideas on paper or digital templates in response to a guiding question. After a short period of time (usually 3–5 minutes), each participant passes their sheet to the next person, who then reads the existing ideas and adds new ones – either their own or based on previous suggestions. This cycle is repeated several times, often until all the designated fields are filled in.

Brainwriting is particularly useful when dealing with complex, sensitive or multidimensional topics, such as health literacy and digital health literacy. It ensures that quieter individuals or those from different cultural backgrounds can make meaningful contributions without being influenced by group dynamics or dominant voices.

The key features of brainwriting include:

- Anonymity or reduced social pressure
- Promotion of lateral thinking and different perspectives
- Rapid collection of ideas in a short time
- Reduction of groupthink by preventing early convergence on a single idea

This method is ideal as a starting point for deeper analysis, strategy development, user-centred design processes or community health planning.

Procedure:

1. Preparation:

- Prepare cards or worksheets with focused questions, such as:
 - “What are barriers to health literacy?”
 - “What supports digital health literacy among the public?”
- Provide each person with a worksheet or template with multiple rows for idea entries.

2. Process:

- Each participant (3–7 people per group) writes down their first 3 ideas silently in the top row.
- The sheet is then passed clockwise to the next person.
- That person adds new ideas or builds on previous ones.
- The process continues for 4–5 rounds or until all rows are filled.

3. Duration:

Around 20–30 minutes per session, depending on group size and number of rounds.

4. Follow-up:

- Cluster and prioritize the collected ideas as a group (e.g., using dot voting or categorization).
- Document results by category: "Barriers", "Facilitators", "Actionable Suggestions", etc.

Benefits:

- Encourages input from quieter participants.
- Generates a large volume of ideas quickly.
- Serves as a foundation for further discussion or analysis.

Sample Guiding Questions:

- What barriers do people face when dealing with digital health information?
- What makes it easier for people to understand and use health information?
- What digital skills are required, and how can they be improved?

Brainwriting Worksheet (Example)

Topic:

Barriers and Facilitators of Health Literacy and Digital Health Literacy

Instructions:

In the first row, please write 3 ideas or keywords in response to the questions below. Then pass the sheet to the next person. They will add or expand on ideas. No talking.

Round	Barriers: What prevents people from understanding or using health information or digital health services?	Facilitators: What helps people understand and use health information and digital services?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		