**Preparation checklist**

1. **Choose who to work with** – Form an organising group including health organisations; academics; development organisations; health, water and environment experts; and local government and health ministry officials.
2. **Do your research** – What is the current situation around water, sanitation and hygiene in healthcare facilities in your country? Who can you work with to improve the situation? Is there already an initiative in place, led by the ministry of health or other agencies? If so, the relevant people should be included in the symposium.
3. **Decide the details** – In your organising group, choose a name for your event and write a mission statement that can be included in any communications. Establish your specific goals (for example, holding a symposium, writing a report afterwards, and agreeing follow-up actions) and set timescales for completing them. Agree the scope and content of the meeting. What topics will you cover?
4. **Get funding** – Does anyone in the organising group have contacts with a sponsor who may be available to fund your event?
5. **Book the venue and invite participants** – Think carefully about ways to make the invitation as engaging as possible, so people are more likely to accept.
6. **Arrange publicity and media** – Agree how you will publicise the event. Consider partnering with a health journal, newspaper, or journalist network to increase coverage of the event. Plan how you will share the outcomes of the symposium with the participants and media to keep campaigning for change.
7. **Decide on the resources to be shared at the event** – Will you share an academic paper in advance of the symposium as a basis for discussion? Is there a case study of successful improvements to water facilities in healthcare in your district or country?

**What is the right format for your symposium?**

Think carefully about what would be your ideal scenario for the event – how can the format of the event help to achieve your goals? Here are some ideas:

1. **Open with information**: use videos, stories and facts to introduce the national situation.
2. **Format ideas**:
   1. **Roundtable discussion**: All participants sit around a round table. Key note speakers start the debate and all participants are invited to contribute. A rapporteur sums up the discussion and action points.
   2. **Panel discussion**: Several speakers are invited to give keynote speeches followed by questions and comments from the audience. Most suitable for high-level participation.
   3. **Action**: Participants break into groups to discuss one aspect of the situation and suggest solutions. Each reports back to the larger group.
3. **The chair or a rapporteur finishes** by summing up contributions and next steps. A report is circulated to all participants.

**What will be the outcomes of your symposium?**

What do you want your event to achieve? What would success look like? How can you make sure that the good ideas or promises made at the event are followed through? Here are some ideas for outcomes you could aim for:

* A commitment from a health minister (or other key decision-maker) to take action to improve the provision of clean water, sanitation and hygiene in existing healthcare facilities.
* A commitment from a health minister (or similar) that no new healthcare facilities will be built without adequate clean water, sanitation and hygiene, and that national guidelines and standards will be revised accordingly.
* An agreement to hold new or improved training courses for health professionals in good hygiene practice and promotion.
* A commitment that the attendees of your event will be consulted and have the opportunity to feed in to a policy review process to ensure water, sanitation and hygiene are properly embedded in health policies or plans.
* A commitment from a health minister or donor on new funding to improve access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene.

**How you will ensure these outcomes are achieved?**

How will you make sure these words become action? Can you ask decision-makers for a timeline for the changes to come into force? Can you secure a follow-up event that will enable you to continue the conversation? Consider whether it would be helpful to record the commitments made at the event in a publicly available record, in a press release to the media, or using social media.