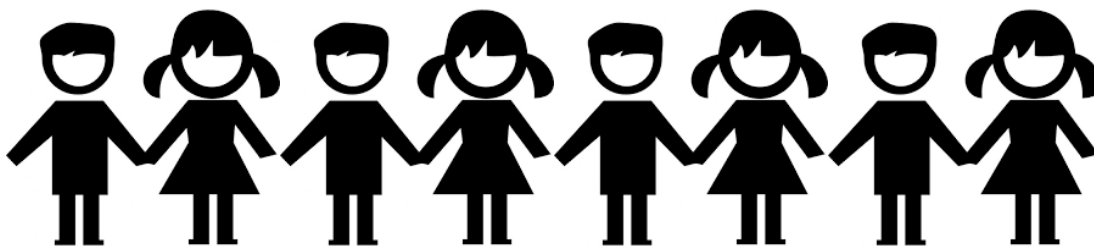


# How to ensure community participation in successful child health outreach?

## The coming together of science, experience & local know-how



## 10 Questions that can help equip us to serve the communities better!

### 1. What is a simple definition of people's participation?

At the most basic level, participation means **people being involved in decisions that affect their lives**. Through participation people can identify opportunities and strategies for action, and build solidarity to effect change.

### 2. What does community participation in the health care system look like?

Community participation also brings together precious local resources for health, both tangible & intangible. Community participation **occurs when a community organizes itself and takes responsibility for managing its problems**. Taking responsibility includes identifying problems, developing actions, putting them into place, and following through those actions. As community health workers we can assist, we can encourage ....we can even inspire our local communities to visualize health as a fundamental right and how their participation is an important proactive step in improving individual health and community health.

### 3. Why is community participation important in health?

Community participation in health offers various advantages in health care and development. Key among them include helping communities to develop informed problem solving skills, making them to take responsibility for their health and welfare, ensuring that the need and problems of the community are adequately addressed. Education & health advocacy are therefore critical pre-requisites and preparatory blocks to quality community participation in health care.

### 4. What are examples of community participation?

Examples of informed & established community involvement includes engaging with specific at-risk groups , volunteering for or donating to local schools, government, and/or nonprofit organizations.

### 5. What are the 5 important types of community participation and engagement?

- Direct Service (People)
- Direct Service (Product)
- Community mobilization and building of a committed group
- Community Education
- Economic Development : thus influencing the socio-economic determinants of health
- Community Organizing.

## 6. What can be the role of the community in primary health care?

**Creating connections between vulnerable populations and health care providers.** Helping patients navigate healthcare and social service systems. Manage care and care transitions for vulnerable populations. Reduce social isolation among patients.

## 7. What does Community Participation ensures?

- Self-reliance and sustainability: Individuals come to know of the health problems of the community and learn the ways and means of overcoming these. They no longer are mere passive beneficiaries of Government aid. They can demand these services
- Overcoming cultural barriers to healthcare: They don't remain obliged to accept conventional solutions to their problems
- Better communication with the community: Health education can penetrate better in the community if the trained community workers are involved and motivated. Also the specific concerns of the community are conveyed better to the planners
- Community can provide labour and even financial resources for healthcare if needed

## 7. What are the roles of community health workers (CHW)?

CHW's carry out functions that are person-centered, support team-based care, address social determinants of health, and promote health care access, patient engagement, and outcomes.

## 8. Who are community health extension workers?

The term "CHWs" refers to **health workers who have received standardized training outside the formal nursing or medical curricula**; governments and individual institutions use various names and training approaches for these cadres.

## 9. Who are some effective community health workers in India?

- Currently, there are **approximately 900,000 ASHAs in rural areas and over 64,000 ASHAs in urban areas**. As an essential conduit between the public health system and the community, and as trusted community members, ASHAs extend the reach of health care centers to underserved and often rural and remote populations.
- **Similarly ICDS workers across India** provide vital services to children in the early childhood age group. Health, education, nutrition are some of the critical areas where ICDS plays a very critical role.

**According to WHO, the most realistic method of attaining community participation is to employ 'community health workers':**

- The community health worker provides the first level of contact between individuals and health care system.
- They can be trained in short time to perform specific tasks and carry out a vast range of activities. They come from and are chosen by the community they live in.
- Training and re-training of these workers is the responsibility of the administration.
- When more complicated care or advice on complex problems is required, the community health workers should have access to technically trained staff.

Source: WHO

Compiled by: Public Health Desk @ ICPH



