Innovative Approaches to Involve Communities and Improve Coverage by CHWS

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Community Health Workers’ relationship to communities and volunteers

This session will address distribution of tasks and the structure of relationships at the community level between formal CHW cadres and community level volunteers/part-time community-based workers and community structures.

Objectives:

1. To review the relationship (including issues of governance and accountability) between CHWs and the communities they serve, including the history and evolution of this relationship.
2. To review examples of community-based programmes that utilize CHWs and community volunteers/part-time community-based workers
3. To interrogate the respective tasks and their distribution between CHWs and volunteers/part-time community-based workers in health care provision and community development.
4. To examine the structures and processes that influence the relationship between CHWs, volunteers/part-time community-based workers and the communities they serve in selected countries.
5. To examine the contextual and health system factors, including ‘supply’ and ‘demand’, that impact on improved coverage and effectiveness of community-based health care, including different geographical settings.
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Expected outputs:

1. A more detailed appreciation of the respective roles and potential tasks of CHWs and volunteers they work with and their relationships with their communities, including training and educational requirements.

2. A more precise estimate of the optimal ratio of CHWs to volunteers and their respective ratios to population served to ensure effective coverage.

3. Guidance for planners and programme managers in development of effective community-based health care, including the most functional structures to enable community involvement in health.