



HOW DO WE WORK BEST WITH OUR COMMUNITIES?

Through:
Commitment, Communication, Cooperation & Coordination
Here are 5 rules of Thumb:

- + Be Mindful of Traditions, Culture and Beliefs
- + Cooperate with Community Groups, Networks and Organisations
- + Engage Community Leadership; Traditional, Religious and Political
- + Make use of Community Resources, People and Ideas
- + Get involved in Community Plans, Programmes and Activities



Seek to:

- ✓ Share Resources
- ✓ Know & Engage Opponents/Allies
- ✓ Identify opportunities
- ✓ Address Challenges
- ✓ Celebrate Achievements

Guidelines on Community Engagement

Health, we know is produced at the household or better still community level. It is believed that the community knows best its health needs thus in working to improve health outcomes, we need to engage our communities. This will help improve their health seeking behaviour, improve local ownership and ensure sustainability of health interventions to promote health.

How do we engage our communities?

In engaging with communities, health facilities are encouraged to carry out the following:

1. Engage Community Leadership; Traditional, Religious and Political
 Health staff must engage opinion leaders in their communities to encourage local ownership and buy-in for activities organized for the community and to ensure relevance of services being provided by health facilities in promoting the health of the population. This includes chiefs, religious leaders, district assembly members etc.

***Do NOT Disrespect, Disregard, Neglect, or be seen to want to Control community leaders.**

2. Be mindful of Traditions, Culture and Beliefs

In working with communities we need to be mindful of local traditions, culture and beliefs of the people. This is important to enable us appreciate their problems and provide solutions within their context. E.g. understanding community practices will enable us respectively caution against or endorse habits that are detrimental or beneficial to health.

***REMEMBER to Investigate, Understand, Appreciate and Value useful traditions and Support Change.**

3. Cooperate with Community Groups, Networks and Organisations

The facility is encouraged to recognise and cooperate with important groups, organizations and networks, both internal and external that exist within the community and who may influence and or support the work they do.

***ALWAYS be Inclusive, Ask views of others, Partner, Build Capacity and Demonstrate Respect.**

4. Make use of Community Resources, People and Ideas

Make use of Community resources (space, infrastructure, funds, labour, etc.) and ideas in supporting and carrying out health activities. By interacting with our communities, we will be able to receive important information for decision making and planning for health services.

***SEEK to Share Resources, Know & Engage Partners/Opponents, Identify Opportunities, Address Challenges and Celebrate Achievements with the community.**

5. Get involved in Community Programmes, Plans and Activities

Facilities are to get involved in community programmes or get their communities involved in planning for their health needs. This will promote local ownership and encourage utilization of health services. It will also ensure that hard to reach populations and communities are catered for during planning of health services. E.g. through outreach programmes etc.

***ENCOURAGE Joint planning, Working together, and Results monitoring with community members to promote equality and fairness.**

