



Building Capable Communities



Community Capacity and health
outcomes



Participation

Only by participating in small groups or larger organizations can individual community members better define, analyze and act on issues of concern to the community.

- Improves health by...
- Increased social networks.
- Improved social support.
- Better self/social esteem.
- Decreased isolation/exclusion.
- Better forms of public governance.
- Living in areas where overall participation rates are high does confer individual health benefits.

Leadership

Leadership requires a strong participant base just as participation requires the direction and structure of strong leadership. Both play an important role in the development of small groups and community organizations.

- Leadership improves health by...
- Leadership improves a groups' ability to mobilize internal/external resources.
- Leadership strengthens authority of community "voice," influencing healthy public policies.

Organizational structures

Organizational structures are groups through which people come together to socialize and to address shared concerns and problems.

- **Organizational structures...**
- **Formal organizations are better able to mobilize resources, provide network/social support opportunities or influence healthy public policies.**
- **Can be healthy or unhealthy for their members, depending on their levels of hierarchy, decision-making styles, development of cliques, management of conflicts.**

Problem assessment

Capacity-building presumes that identifying problems, solutions and actions is carried out by the community. These issues then provide the focus for community action.

- **Problem assessment improves health by...**
- **Sense of ownership and self/social esteem.**
- **Promotes participation.**
- **identifying problems that improve health/quality of life begins to address these issues.**
- **Lessens “surplus powerlessness”.**

Asking why?

The ability to critically analyze social, political, economic and other causes of inequalities improves choices of personal and social change strategies.

- Asking why improves health by...
- Learning = higher formal education = higher labour market participation = higher income/security = better health.
- Learning = higher formal education = better personal health behaviors, self/social esteem, larger networks, less self-blame, greater ability to influence policy makers, improved resource mobilization.

Resource mobilisation

The ability of the community to mobilise resources from within and to negotiate resources from beyond itself is important factor in its ability to achieve successes in its efforts.

- **Resource mobilisation improves health by...**
- **Mobilising internal resources improves self/social esteem, social networks and lessens self-blame.**
- **Mobilising external resources builds partnerships and alliances.**
- **Transferring resources to poorer individuals, decreasing absolute and relative poverty.**
- **Non-income transfer of resources, increasing retained income amongst poor.**

Links with others

Links with people and organizations, including partnerships, coalitions and voluntary alliances between the community and others, assists the community in addressing its issues.

- **Links with others improves health by...**
- **Increases social network density and social capital with generally health enhancing effects.**
- **Improves collective strengths in influencing healthy public policies, and resource mobilization/transfers.**
- **Instrumentally, coalitions, alliances and partnerships associated with sustainable health promotion programmes and improved health.**

The outside agents

Outside agents are often an important link between communities and external resources, increasingly transforming power relationships between themselves, outside agencies and the community, such that the community assumes increasing programme control.

- **Outside agents improve health by...**
- **The empowering qualities of their practice.**
- **Building self/social esteem.**
- **Providing access to resources.**

Programme management

Programme management that builds community capacity includes increased control by the primary stakeholders over decisions on planning, implementation, evaluation, finances, administration, reporting and conflict resolution.

- Programme management improves health...
- Sense of control over important living conditions and decision-making (their experience of their own authority or power) increases.
- Equitable distribution of control over decisions and resources.