

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS IN FAITH-BASED HEALTH SYSTEMS

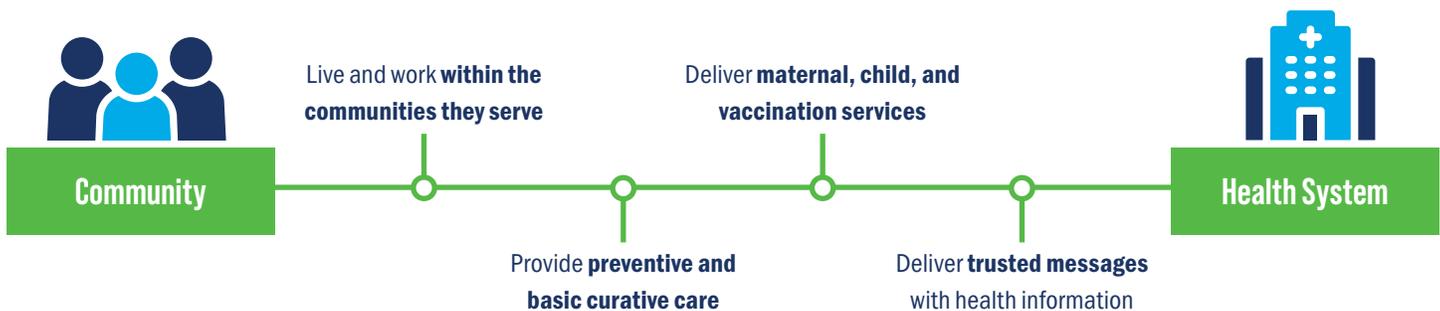
FIRST, LAST, AND ENDURING RESPONDERS TO HUMANITARIAN CRISES

WHO ARE COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS?

Community Health Workers Bridge Health Systems and Communities

Community Health Workers (CHWs) are often the primary, and sometimes only, source of health care for millions in low- and middle-income countries. Embedded within their communities, they connect people to essential preventive and curative care.

What do CHWs do?



HOW HAS THE CHW ROLE HAS EXPANDED?

From Primary Care to Frontline Crisis Response

Community Health Workers now serve as the first line of defense during outbreaks, conflict, displacement, and extreme weather events. Embedded within and trusted by their communities, CHWs remain operational when health facilities close—delivering lifesaving services, accurate information, and continuity of care in the most fragile settings.

Expanded Crisis Response Roles



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IMA WORLD HEALTH'S EXPERIENCE MOBILIZING CHWS

IMA World Health-Supported CHWs in Action Across Fragile Contexts

Democratic Republic of Congo

- **5,000+ CHWs** mobilized during the **2018–2020 Ebola outbreak**
- **200+ CHWs** across **12 districts** responding to cholera threats
- Active Mpox surveillance, WASH promotion, and referrals

South Sudan

- Dry-season vaccination campaigns reaching **tens of thousands of children**
- Mobile CHW teams delivering MNCH services in conflict zones

Sierra Leone

- District-wide Mpox awareness and referral campaigns
- Resulted in **lowest new case rates** in targeted districts

Yemen

- CHWs trusted by all sides delivered MNCH services
- Operated in IDP settings under active conflict

CHALLENGES FACING CHWS & WHAT MUST BE DONE

CHWs Are Essential — but Under-Supported

Key Barriers

- Limited training and supervision
- Insufficient protective equipment and supplies
- Low or inconsistent compensation
- Weak integration into national health systems



Strengthening CHWs Strengthens Health Systems

Recommendations

- ✓ **Invest in training:** Ongoing education, mentorship, supervision
- ✓ **Ensure fair pay and resources:** Tools, supplies, protection
- ✓ **Integrate CHWs into national systems:** Policy, funding, support
- ✓ **Promote community participation:** Co-design and accountability
- ✓ **Leverage technology:** Mobile tools for training and reporting

As conflict, disease outbreaks, climate shocks, and displacement increase worldwide, Community Health Workers will remain indispensable. Investing in CHWs is not optional — it is essential to resilient, equitable health systems.



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