

# COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

## General key messages

- A community is a set of people with some shared experiences or a group of people who live in the same area.
- Community development helps to build communities.
- Community development is about people and what the community does for itself. It involves building people and working with them.
- Community participation involves all members of the community in decision making about developments in the community.  
(use of participatory methods)

## Key messages for a volunteer

- A volunteer should facilitate the change of attitude and belief of the community.
- A volunteer should enable the people to rediscover their strength and capabilities.
- A volunteer should direct their strengths and capabilities to the community's own development.
- A volunteer should be a role model.

## Point of entry to the community

- As a volunteer, you are primarily expected to work with your community. However in some instances, you can be called upon to work with other neighbouring communities.
- Be prepared with the facilitation skills to be able to understand the community and work amicably with them.
- At the point of entry, identify the key people to work with others such as elders, leaders (opinion, church, elected) and health staff within the community and inform them of your intentions.
- Together with the key people, identify the community members to work with in the community such as community based organizations, schools, churches and clubs among others.
- Equip yourself with the necessary details about the task/ project you want to discuss with the community leaders and members.
- Explain to the community members what you want to collectively achieve in their community (what you want to help them do and not do for them).
- Inform the community members that they are all to be involved in the activities to be undertaken.
- Explain the importance of community participation and explain the three Cs of community participation.



- Do a community assessment with community members to determine priority needs.
- Organize, train and motivate groups (men, women and youth) within the community to carry out specific community actions.
- Ensure that roles and responsibilities are well defined for all actors to avoid conflicts.
- Assist community leaders to schedule and conduct community action plans.
- Mobilize the community to come up with a map of the community resources (through resource mapping).
- Identify a group that will take you through the community to familiarize with the water and sanitation facilities. (Through a transect walk)

## What you should know about community management

- Community management of water resources, sanitation and hygiene is a core aspect of the sustainability principle.
- Communities and external agencies work in partnership to support each other.
- Success in one community stimulates success in another community.
- Pooling of resources among communities can bring faster and more cost effective implementation of a project.
- Water, sanitation and hygiene development and management should be based on a participatory approach.
- Conflict resolution. Help the community to identify existing conflicts in regard to ownership, access, use and decision making on water and sanitation facilities.
- Ask the community to identify and describe roles of actors likely to be involved in resolving the conflicts and the mechanisms used.
- Ask the community to identify avenues for possible conflicts and ways in which the conflicts can be dealt with.