

COVID-19: BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

WHY DOES COMMUNITY RESILIENCE MATTER FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY?

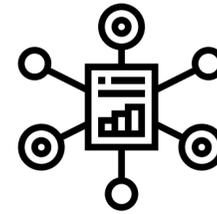
As the unequal impact of the global pandemic continues, there is a need to support vulnerable communities and build up 'community resilience.' A community resilience approach means to work in partnership with communities to strengthen their capacity and mitigate the impact of the pandemic, including social and economic fallout. Community capacity means a community's abilities, strengths, and resources which can be used to absorb a shock, adapt to a shock, or transform the community to build back better.

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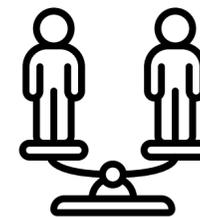
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Using a resilience framework means focus is on addressing the social and economic impact on vulnerable groups – however it has been underutilised in the pandemic.



Public health practitioners can adapt or use community assets like local knowledge, technical capacity (e.g., potable water distribution, vulnerable household identification) to strengthen the community's role in epidemic response and recovery and build up long-term resilience.



A social justice approach to community resilience can build equity in the longer term, distribute resources fairly, and strengthen a community's most vulnerable people.

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WHAT ARE COMMUNITIES ALREADY DOING TO MITIGATE COVID-19?

During the pandemic, communities have developed and managed different ways to address and mitigate short- and long-term impact. Community responses contribute to improved access to basic services - often complementing or even substituting delays in government response.

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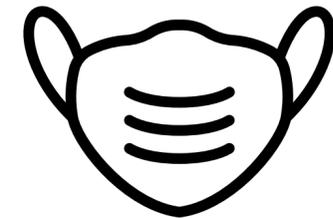
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In Kenya, a slum-dweller organisation collected information on COVID-19 in informal settlements, identified community isolation areas, and implemented other public health measures.



In rural India, women micro-entrepreneurs developed and distributed millions of face masks.

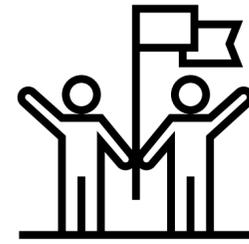


In Argentina, a faith-based network supported local approaches to shield the elderly.

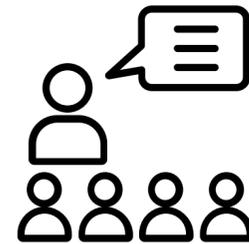
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HOW TO BUILD RESILIENCE DURING A PANDEMIC

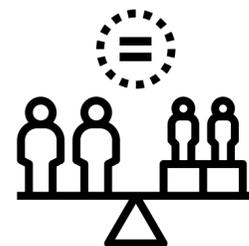
It is vital to think of communities as partners in an epidemic response and consider both their health and livelihood needs.



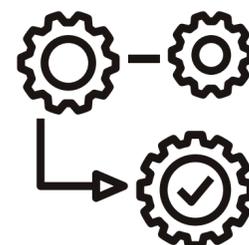
Communities are the experts in how to build resilience and respond – health and humanitarian practitioners should support what communities are already doing and build on it.



Strengthen capacities like social capital, new skills and training and access to financial capital to help a community to weather the pandemic and its economic impact.



Use social justice principles (equity, participation, human rights) to guide resilience programmes to address inequalities, support vulnerable groups, and build social cohesion.



Use systems thinking (e.g., involve different sectors and groups) to build community resilience. E.g. a resilient market system could support households to earn a living even during a chaotic crisis.