



Recommendations on the role of community health workers (CHWs) in the COVID-19 response



The George Institute
for Global Health

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1 Engaging CHWs who are delivering routine services to conduct COVID-19 case identification and listing is risky, and may further transmission.

Policymakers should:

- Ask CHWs to **focus on raising awareness and countering social stigma** around COVID-19.
- **Engage a separate, trained cadre** to conduct COVID-19 case identification and listing.



2 CHWs delivering routine services are at an increased risk of being infected with COVID-19.

Policymakers should:

- Provide CHWs with personal **protective equipment: gloves, surgical masks and hand sanitisers**.
- Provide **N95 masks and gloves to a separate cadre engaged in COVID-19 case identification**.
- Provide all equipment in adequate quantities and with **training on proper usage at the outset**.



3 COVID-19 is likely to disrupt supply chains, logistics and supportive supervision of CHWs, which will have an impact on the services they deliver.

Policymakers should:

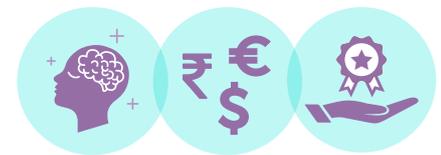
- **Develop clear guidelines** for CHWs on which **services are essential and must continue to be delivered**, and which may be suspended or postponed.
- Provide CHWs with **training and develop protocols for COVID-19-related activities, such as awareness-raising and countering social stigma**.



4 CHWs may experience stigma, social isolation and increased stress, and may distance themselves from their families to minimise the risk of infection.

Policymakers should:

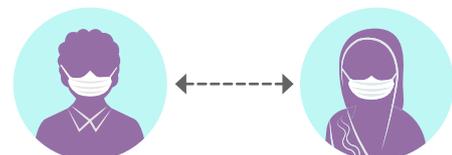
- Ensure CHWs have **access to psycho-social support services, additional transport allowances and childcare support**.
- **Implement reward and recognition programmes** for CHWs to support their motivation and coping strategies.



5 Prevention measures such as physical distancing may not be practical in many contexts, including in informal settlements, in communities with large extended families, and among the homeless.

Policymakers together with the World Health Organization should:

- **Develop practical guidance and materials** that can be used by CHWs with groups **for whom physical distancing measures are not possible**.



Recommendations based on the Rapid Evidence Synthesis conducted by The George Institute India. [Read more here.](#)