

CASE STUDY FROM MEWAT DISTRICT, HARYANA, INDIA

Community Health Worker- Led Intervention for Vaccine Information and Confidence



The pilot project was conducted in India's Mewat District between January 2021 – December 2021. It was implemented through a partnership between the Johns Hopkins Maternal and Child Health Center India and Bal Umang Drishya Sanstha (BUDS), with funding from the Sabin Vaccine Institute. The project received ethics approval from The Office of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) The Ethics Committee (IRB) of BUDS.





4. Evaluation of the Intervention and CAB Sustainability

The post-intervention caregiver KAP survey and interviews with CHWs and CAB members observed several improvements within the community, as follows:

Caregivers' perceptions	CHW's perceptions
<p>Improvements in community knowledge of vaccination side effects and benefits of vaccination</p> <p>Caregivers welcomed the involvement of fathers and community leaders in vaccination</p> <p>CHWs are perceived as being more present and active in the community</p> <p>Caregivers were more personally involved in obtaining vaccines, willing to travel long distances; and there were fewer suggested reasons to refuse vaccination</p>	<p>Physical items (videos and pamphlets) were most helpful for communication with caregivers</p> <p>Communication training was a helpful method of training</p> <p>Links with community leaders were improved, which provided support towards reaching hesitant caregivers</p> <p>Improvements in both routine immunization services and COVID-19 vaccination due to various communication, coordination, and strengthened connections</p> <p>Increased confidence due to broad skill development allowing for the use of online platforms, discussion of issue with caregivers, and improved relationships with caregivers by leveraging the CAB</p> <p>Increased ownership and empowerment to apply skills to facilitate change</p>

Throughout the study intervention period, the CAB met monthly to review CHW services, identify problems, talk about solutions, and help CHWs improve their rapport in the community. As an indicator of sustainability, the CAB found significant value in their work and expressed the desire to continue meeting to facilitate positive impact in Mewat regarding other key community priorities: preventing child marriage, improving education for girls, and more autonomy for women.

Figure 3: Interpersonal Communication for Immunization Training

<p>Two-Way Dialogue </p> <p>Good IPC is when both people speak and listen to the other without interrupting, ask questions and share information</p>	<p>Atmosphere of Caring </p> <p>Listen carefully, making eye contact, asking good questions, and being understanding will make caregivers feel important and show them that you really care about them.</p>	<p>Encourage Dialogue </p> <p>Asking caregivers open questions will encourage them to share concerns.</p> <p>Once caregivers describe the situation, you might have a better idea of how to best help them.</p>	<p>Present Information </p> <p>Share information in a way that the caregivers can easily understand.</p> <p>It may be good to use pictures when possible</p>
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INFORMING COMMUNITY ACTION

Policy

- Acknowledge, articulate, and address the values that community members hold
- Invest resources for community members to co-create viable solutions and trust their ability to do so
- Support non-traditional leadership (CAB) to facilitate change and ownership over health promotion as a sustainable method

Program

- Faith leaders: Earn their trust, empower them with knowledge on vaccine benefits and as vaccine champions
- Conduct a robust communication campaign of the COVID-19 vaccine prior to vaccination days
- Engage with CHWs and community members to understand the specific type of impactful information and ways it should be communicated. Suggestions of communication strategies are using targeted health promotional videos and simple pamphlets with local community influencers shareable via digital platforms (e.g.: WhatsApp)

Practice

- Improve lines of communication and coordination between CHWs and health care providers who provide vaccinations
- Communicate health information in local dialects and in less technical terms that people understand
- Empower CHWs to address vaccine adverse events and vaccine-related queries from communities

RESEARCH LEADS



Baldeep Dhaliwal, MSPH

John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Baldeep K. Dhaliwal (she/her) is in the doctoral program at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in the Department of International Health, Social and Behavioral Interventions. She previously worked as a Research Associate II at the International Vaccine Access Center. Baldeep's work has focused on understanding multi-level perceptions that impact vaccine-seeking behavior, while working with communities to co-create grassroots-level interventions to improve vaccine uptake



Rajeev Seth, MD, MBBS

Bal Umang Drishya Sanstha (BUDS)

Dr Rajeev Seth is a U.S.-trained, American Board Certified Social Pediatrician with expertise in the delivery of mobile health, access to vaccinations and welfare for underprivileged children and young people in low resource community settings. As co-founder of a non-profit organization BUDS, Dr Seth's work has reached out to serve the child health, vaccinations, nutrition and rehabilitation needs of more than 81,000 marginalized children in Delhi and rural villages in the backward district of Mewat, India since 2003.



Anita Shet, MD, MBBS, PhD

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Anita Shet is a pediatric infectious diseases specialist with broad interests in childhood infections in low and middle-income countries with a specific focus on vaccine-preventable infections. Her research also explores the link between timely immunization and cognitive outcomes in children. She currently serves on the Council of the International Congress of Infectious Diseases, and is member of the Dengue Vaccines Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) Workgroup. She also serves on the NIH Candidate Vaccine Advisory Committee and the Steering Group on Epidemiological Preparation for Vaccine Trials established by the Indo-US Vaccine Action Program to provide guidance on epidemiological and vaccine studies for dengue and chikungunya control in India.