COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS
Bringing Health and Information Services to the Community to Increase Family Planning Uptake

**Why use this approach?**
This approach is globally recognized as an effective way to increase uptake of family planning. When trained and provided with the necessary tools and resources, community health workers (CHWs) can fill gaps in demand generation and service delivery. CHWs are trusted community members with knowledge and understanding of their communities’ unmet needs.

**STEP 1: Identify existing CHWs**
who can provide family planning information and services and have already established relationships with the communities they serve. In selecting CHWs to train, prioritize those who have already undergone Community Strategy training and/or work closely with health facilities.

**STEP 2: Determine the responsibilities of CHWs**
based on their level of education and training. For example, which methods are they able to provide versus refer? On which methods are they most comfortable counseling? How have they been used in the past for awareness-raising activities? How comfortable are they in carrying out these activities?

**STEP 3: Train CHWs**
with supplemental training in family planning. Use and/or adapt Tupange’s five-day training on Family Planning to equip CHWs with adequate knowledge and skills to conduct community-based distribution of contraceptives. In addition, use the shorter postpartum FP orientation for CHWs to reinforce the importance of this critical time after labor and delivery for healthy timing and spacing of the next pregnancy if desired.

**STEP 4: Offer supportive supervision**
to ensure that CHWs are operating within a system that will support and guide them in their responsibilities. Supervisors should routinely oversee the activities of CHWs and hold monthly meetings to provide feedback. Use the Supervision Checklist for Level One Service during monthly meetings to assess not only how the CHW is doing but also any issues with supplies and other equipment. Monthly meetings can also serve as a way to provide family planning updates to CHWs and discuss myths and misconceptions encountered in the community.
STEP 5: Provide CHWs with equipment and supplies
to do their work effectively and based on their responsibilities. For example, to facilitate counseling, CHWs would benefit from the flip chart, A guide to family planning for health workers and their clients. If CHWs refer clients to facilities for contraceptive methods, they will need referral slips. To conduct community mobilization, CHWs will need promotional materials. To provide contraceptive methods, CHWs will need a stock of those methods and a way to replenish them, as needed. Health facilities should provide CHWs with a commodity tracking tool to account for commodities distributed.

STEP 6: Use CHWs creatively
for demand generation activities. CHWs can be trained to be facilitators of discussion groups among community members to further reinforce family planning information received from radio and TV programming, theater performances, and other communication materials. CHWs can also serve as mobilizers for in-reaches, outreaches, and community health service days.

STEP 7: Motivate and support CHWs
by providing them with lunch and transport during days that they are engaged in mobilization activities. Recognize high-performing CHWs during meetings, issue certificates after completion of training, and provide them with t-shirts, bags, umbrellas, etc.

For more information, refer to http://tciurbanhealth.org/lessons/working-with-community-health-workers-to-promote-family-planning/.