These gallant, dedicated and unselfish heroes are rooted in the communities they serve. They provide health education and assessments, deliver health services and mobilize their communities to help save lives. They establish links and foster collaboration between their communities and nearby clinics. They are catalysts of change.

Community Health Worker Services

Home Visits – CHWs educate households with pregnant women, new mothers and children under five on a variety of health related topics in order to have the greatest impact on reducing maternal and child mortality.

Health Education & Referrals – CHWs provide education about young child nutrition, breastfeeding, malaria, vaccines, preventable diseases, pneumonia, diarrhea and other water borne diseases, pre and postnatal care, danger signs during pregnancy and appropriate birthing practices to pregnant women. They also make referrals to local health centers.

Postnatal Care – CHWs ensure new mothers are recovering well from birth and check on the newborn baby. They teach them about postpartum danger signs, breastfeeding, newborn care and danger signs for newborn illness.

Preventative Services & Treatment – In some of our projects CHWs are trained to provide basic treatments for malaria, pneumonia and diarrhea during home visits.

Vulnerable Communities Need Community Health Workers (CHWs)

- Families live long distances from health centers.
- Transport is costly.
- There is a fear of stigmatization from health centers staff, and concerns about confidentiality.
- There is often lack of knowledge of simple disease prevention methods.
- Neighbors or community members with health information and knowledge are valued and influential.
- CHWs create a sense of connection and add a personal touch to community health services that is encouraging and motivational.
How Community Health Workers Are Compensated

Remuneration to community health workers varies depending on the country, the context and the nature of the project.

In most MFH projects, community health workers receive small stipends as recognition for their work. These stipends and salaries are not always sustainable, so we have developed a variety of economic strengthening activities (ESAs) to ensure that community health workers remain motivated and projects are sustainable even after they end.

Some of these are:
- Creation of savings and lending communities
- Assistance in growing cash crops
- Rearing small animals
- Initiating “moto-taxi” businesses
- Milling machines for transforming agricultural products

MFH Community Health Worker Programs Vary from Country to Country, and Even Community to Community

Components are collaboratively developed, based on culture, need, policies and the health care system. Some elements common to each Medicines for Humanity community health worker program include:

- Program development in collaboration with the community
- Community identification and recruitment of personnel
- Training for 2-10 weeks and regular refresher training
- Supplies and equipment (education materials, medicines, first aid kits, reporting tools, raincoats and gumboots for travel, etc.)
- Practical supervision and monitoring
- Economic empowerment programs

Community Health Workers Are Our Partners

We equip them with knowledge, tools, and means, to foster social and behavioral change within their communities.

We address their needs and economic requirements so they can provide their services to their communities.

We give them the education and support they need to develop sustainable income generating activities that benefit themselves and their communities.