

Assessing Community Readiness



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What I'll talk about



1. Why and how we can assess Community Readiness?
2. What will we do in the Meals4NCDs project?



Why assess community readiness?

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1. There is a need to **improve food environments** in Ghana for children/adolescents to promote healthy, safe diets
2. Community involvement recognised as an **important factor** in the success and sustainability of efforts to promote healthier eating
3. Interventions proposed should **match the stage** of community readiness



What is Community Readiness ?



- *Community readiness*: the degree to which a community is prepared to take action on an issue, accounting for obstacles to change
- Assessing community readiness provides communities with the stage of readiness for developing appropriate interventions that are more likely to be successful and cost effective because it incorporates a *community's culture, resources, and level of readiness*
- Need to match an intervention with community readiness level



Stages of Community Readiness



5 dimensions of community readiness

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- **Community knowledge of the issue**
 - What is the community's knowledge about the issue?
- **Community knowledge of efforts**
 - How much does the community know about the current programmes and activities?
- **Community climate**
 - What is the community's attitude toward addressing the issue?
- **Leadership**
 - What is the leadership's attitude towards addressing the issue?
- **Resources**
 - What are the resources that are being used or could be used to address the issue? (e.g. people, time, space, money)

Community readiness scores in Accra and Ho

Overall 'vague awareness level 3'



Strategies for the 'vague awareness' stage

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Goal: Raise awareness that the community can do something

- Get on the agendas and present information at local community events
- Post flyers, posters, and billboards
- Begin to initiate your events (pot lucks, potlatches, etc.) and use those opportunities to present information on the issue
- Conduct informal local surveys and interviews with community people
- Publish newspaper editorials and articles with local implications.

What can and can't we do by assessing community readiness?



What we can do?

- Help identify resources
- Help identify obstacles
- Assess how ready the community is with respect to accepting an intervention as something that needs doing
- Identify types of efforts that are appropriate to initiate, depending on stage of readiness

What we can't do?

- Determine whether an issue is actually occurring in the community
- Make people do what they don't believe in
- Increase readiness levels

Our question in the Meals4NCDs project



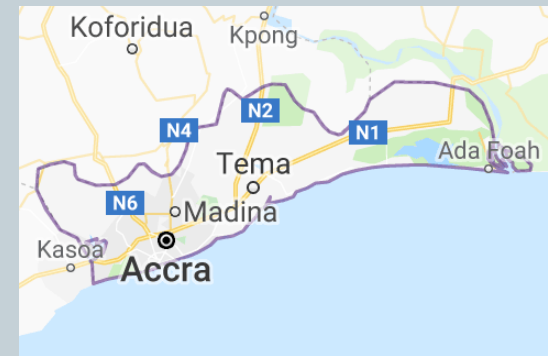
How ready is 'the community' to implement actions to improve children's food environments (the healthiness* of food sold and promoted) in and around schools in the Greater Accra region of Ghana?

*healthiness= nutritional quality and safety

Who is the community in our project?

‘The community’ will be defined by both:

- **Geographical community**
 - within the Greater Accra region
- **Stakeholder interest community**
 - Individuals within the geographic community, judged to wield influence and/or to play a leadership role



Who will be the Community key informants?



A wide range of sectors will be included:

- Sector 1 (**schools**) e.g. SHEP coordinator, school head, school feeding programme
- Sector 2 (**community chiefs**) e.g. queen mother
- Sector 3 (**religious leaders**)
- Sector 4 (**assembly men and women**)
- Sector 6 (**health**)- e.g. MoH, GHS
- Sector 6 (**commerce**) e.g. market queen
- Sector 7 (**development agencies/NGOs**)
- Sector 8 (**youth leaders/clubs**)
- Sector 9 (**Regulatory authorities**), e.g. FDA

The final list will be compiled with inputs from the study team and communities

Thank you

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- **We would welcome your suggestions!**

 **MEALS4NCDs**
Providing Measurement, Evaluation, Accountability
& Leadership Support (MEALS) for NCDs Prevention

