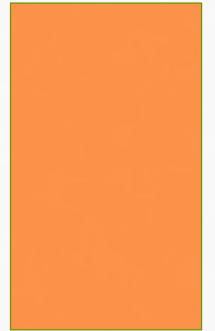


**BUILDING CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION USING  
PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY  
HEALTH IN AN URBAN SLUM IN ACCRA, GHANA**

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# CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION

- Cross-sector collaboration occurs when governments, non-governmental organizations, communities and citizens come together to achieve more than they could when working alone.
- However, the evidence on how to implement cross-sector collaboration in developing countries is lacking.
- This participatory action research (PAR) project was created to help fill this critical evidence gap by incorporating stakeholders as co-strategists in resolving complex health challenges in Accra's urban slums.

# WORKING HYPOTHESES SUPPORTING CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION

- When stakeholders identify issues they cannot address on their own, they will identify complex challenges.
- Middle-out collaboration is necessary when neither government nor community stakeholders are positioned to develop the most effective strategic response to complex challenges.
- Emergent design and governance—characterized by stakeholders making strategic choices about research methodology, participant selection, context, and projects—will lead to the development of the most effective strategic approaches.
- Stakeholders that resource their own participation will be more committed to a long-term collaboration process.
- PAR provides a level of rigor suitable for strategic management of collaboration around a complex challenge.

# OLD FADAMA SLUM IN ACCRA, GHANA



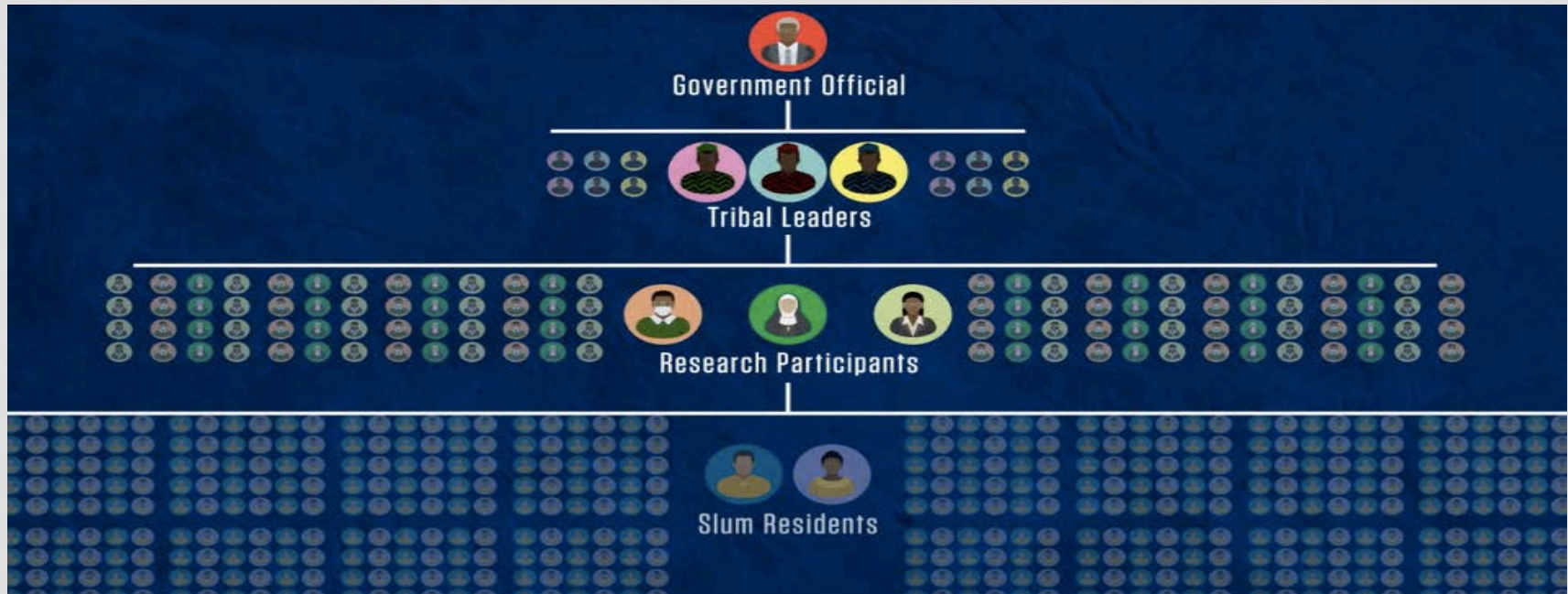


## INTEGRATING WITH THE COMMUNITY

WORKING WITH THE CATHOLIC SISTERS HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN THE SUCCESS OF THE PROJECT BECAUSE OF THEIR LEADERSHIP ROLE WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

# PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

- Participatory action research (PAR) involves researchers and participants working together to define the problem and to formulate research questions and solutions.



# IMPLEMENTING PAR

- **Interviews:** 12 key informant interviews were used to identify a location, barriers, and organisational strengths. Interviewees included national (Ghana Health Service) and municipal (Accra Metropolitan Assembly Directorate of Public Health) government employees, non-governmental organizations including the Catholic Sisters, and community leadership.
- **Focus Group Discussions:** The FGDs were designed to identify strategic opportunities for action and areas of consensus in order to select a project strategy. Through 4 FGDs the stakeholders set a strategy of installing permanent latrines.
- **Community Survey:** A community survey of 59 community members expanded the stakeholders and engaged the community in site selection and latrine management. The survey introduced a democratic component into the latrine management and explored the relationship between the community members, community leaders and the municipal government.

# CREATING LOCAL POLICY CHANGE





# RESULTS

- The stakeholders' first strategy, improving community health by installing latrines, resulted in city sanitation policy change, and the building of two sets of 12-seat latrines and bathhouses and a number of laundry stations.
- The strategy was adopted by local businesses, creating local sustainability and freeing the stakeholders to identify a new problem and develop a strategy to address it.

# GOING FORWARD

- We are now testing and refining the PAR model we developed. Stakeholders have embarked on the next project, which is to empower the *kayayei*, young women and girls who serve as porters in Agbobloshie market and throughout Accra.
- The stakeholders created the *kayayei* Livelihood Empowerment Program (LEAP). The research includes a social determinants of health model focused on key aspects of *kayayei* health: economic health including skill building and credit access; treating and preventing chronic and acute health conditions; and enhancing the education and social welfare of *kayayei* children through educational activities.

# QUESTIONS?

