

# Success Cases in Community Participatory Approaches in South Asia: A Systematic Review

Karunarathne Rasika R A<sup>1</sup>, Praveena D<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of Post Graduate Studies and Research in Sociology, Mangalore University, Mangalagangothri, Konaje.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Postgraduate Studies and Research in Political Science, Mangalore University, Mangalagangothri, Konaje

## Abstract

Community participatory approaches have become an important strategy in development practice across South Asia. These approaches emphasize active involvement of local communities in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of development programs. However, there is a need to systematically examine documented success cases to understand what makes participatory interventions effective and sustainable.

This study aims to identify successful cases of community participatory approaches across South Asian countries, analyze their methodological characteristics, examine sector-wise outcomes, identify common success factors, and explore how sustainability and scalability have been achieved.

The study adopts a systematic review methodology. Relevant peer-reviewed articles, project reports, and institutional publications were selected based on clear inclusion criteria. The analysis focuses on interventions in health, agriculture, water resource management, disaster management, and social empowerment. Data were examined to identify measurable outcomes, duration of interventions, engagement strategies, and institutional support mechanisms.

The findings show that participatory approaches have contributed to improved health service utilization, increased agricultural productivity, better water governance, enhanced disaster preparedness, and stronger social empowerment, particularly among women and marginalized groups. Long-term engagement, community ownership, inclusive participation, capacity building, and collaboration with local institutions emerged as key success factors. Programs that integrated participatory methods into formal governance systems demonstrated greater sustainability and scalability.

In conclusion, community participatory approaches are effective in addressing complex development challenges in South Asia when participation is genuine, inclusive, and supported by institutional commitment. Strengthening long-term partnerships and integrating participatory practices into policy frameworks are essential for sustainable impact.

**Keywords:** Community Participation, South Asia, Sustainable Development, Social Empowerment, Participatory Governance.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

South Asia, home to nearly one-quarter of the world's population, faces persistent challenges in health equity, poverty alleviation, environmental sustainability, and social development. Communities across the

region continue to experience significant gaps in health service access and utilization (Bhuiya et al., 2016), food insecurity (Joshi et al., 2012), water scarcity (Rasool et al., 2024), and vulnerability to disasters and environmental stresses (Ruszczuk et al., 2020). Traditional top-down approaches to development have often failed to address the complex, context-specific needs of diverse communities across the region (Khwaja, 2020). Conventional externally driven models face particular limitations in fragile or complex South Asian contexts, where step-by-step or purely top-down interventions fail to meet local needs without proper institutionalization and community engagement (French et al., 2019).

In response, community participatory approaches have gained prominence as alternative frameworks that position community members as active partners rather than passive recipients in research and development initiatives. Community participatory approaches encompass various methodologies, including community-based participatory research (CBPR), participatory action research (PAR), participatory rural appraisal (PRA), and community-driven development (CDD). These diverse frameworks have been adopted across South Asian countries to address challenges ranging from pesticide-related self-harm prevention in India (Chowdhury et al., 2013) to health improvement in Bangladesh (Bhuiya et al., 2016), community-driven development in Pakistan and Afghanistan (Khwaja, 2020), and disaster risk reduction in Nepal (Ruszczuk et al., 2020).

These approaches share fundamental principles of shared power, mutual respect, co-learning, capacity building, and action toward social change. McCrea (2014) characterizes participatory action principles as emphasizing empowerment, shared value and power, and social transformation. Multiple interventions report capacity building, trust, inclusion, and community co-learning as central to their success (Bhuiya et al., 2016; Ruszczuk et al., 2020). The participatory paradigm recognises that communities possess valuable knowledge, resources, and agency that, when properly mobilised by balancing material resources, local trust, and responsiveness, can lead to sustainable solutions that address local priorities (Bhuiya et al., 2016).

Over the past three decades, South Asian countries have witnessed a proliferation of participatory interventions across multiple sectors. These initiatives have addressed diverse challenges ranging from maternal and child health to agricultural productivity, from water scarcity to disaster preparedness, and from gender inequality to environmental conservation. Longitudinal evidence documents the growth of participatory interventions bridging from the 1990s onward, including a 20-year participatory action research health initiative in Bangladesh beginning in 1994 (Bhuiya et al., 2016), fifteen years of participatory slum upgrading in Afghanistan from 2002 to 2016 (French et al., 2019), participatory varietal selection in Indian agriculture (Paris et al., 2008), and participatory research approaches for food security in Nepal (Joshi et al., 2012). While the literature contains numerous accounts of participatory projects, systematic documentation of success cases with measurable outcomes remains limited.

Understanding what works, why it works, and under what conditions participatory approaches succeed is critical for scaling effective interventions and avoiding ineffective practices. This systematic review addresses this knowledge gap by synthesizing evidence from documented success cases across South Asia, examining the methodologies employed, the outcomes achieved, and the contextual factors that enabled positive results. The review focuses specifically on success cases to identify best practices and replicable models, while acknowledging that learning from failures is equally important for advancing the field.

The South Asian context presents unique opportunities and challenges for participatory approaches. The region's rich tradition of community-based social structures provides existing platforms for participatory engagement. Pre-existing community organizations have served as foundations for participatory

interventions, including rural self-help organizations (SHOs) that facilitated health action in Bangladesh (Bhuiya et al., 2016), farmer groups and women's participation in varietal selection in India (Paris et al., 2008), and female-led disaster risk groups in Nepal (Ruszczuk et al., 2020).

However, persistent inequalities can create barriers to inclusive participation. Gender and class constraints require explicit attention to ensure women and marginalized groups benefit from participatory processes (Paris et al., 2008; Ruszczuk et al., 2020), and structural dynamics shape who benefits from localized programs (Khwaja, 2020). Political instability, resource constraints, and varying levels of government support further shape the implementation landscape. Conflict and fragile governance affect community mobilization capacity (Khwaja, 2020), while institutional commitment determines the potential for scaling participatory approaches (French et al., 2019), and resource availability and local authority commitment shape sustainability (Bhuiya et al., 2016; Ruszczuk et al., 2020). This review examines how successful interventions have navigated these contextual realities to achieve meaningful outcomes.

## 2. Objectives

**This systematic review aims to:**

1. Identify and document success cases of community participatory approaches implemented across South Asian countries, with emphasis on measurable positive outcomes and sustained impact.
2. Analyze the methodological characteristics of successful participatory interventions, including types of participatory approaches used, community engagement strategies, duration of interventions, and scale of implementation.
3. Examine the range of outcomes achieved through participatory approaches across different sectors, including health, agriculture, water resources, disaster management, and social empowerment.
4. Identify common success factors and enabling conditions that contribute to positive outcomes in community participatory interventions across diverse South Asian contexts.
5. Explore how successful interventions have addressed challenges related to sustainability, scalability, and institutionalization of participatory approaches.

## 3. Methodology

A comprehensive literature search was conducted across multiple scholarly databases to identify relevant publications on community participatory approaches in South Asia. The search strategy employed three complementary approaches to ensure comprehensive coverage. First, searches were conducted in Google Scholar and PubMed databases using combinations of keywords related to community participatory methods (CBPR, participatory action research, community-driven development, participatory approaches) and South Asian countries (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Maldives). Second, specific searches targeted success-related terms including "success stories," "positive outcomes," "effective interventions," "case studies," and "impact" to identify publications documenting successful implementations. Third, searches focused on specific intervention domains including health, agriculture, water resources, disaster management, and women's empowerment combined with participatory terminology.

The synthesis employed a thematic analysis approach, organizing findings by intervention sector while identifying cross-cutting themes related to success factors, implementation strategies, and contextual adaptations. Comparative analysis examined similarities and differences across countries, sectors, and types of participatory approaches to identify generalizable principles and context-specific considerations.

#### 4. Analysis of Success Cases

##### 4.1 Health Sector Interventions

Community participatory approaches have demonstrated remarkable success in improving health outcomes across South Asia, with interventions addressing maternal and child health, disease prevention, mental health, and health system strengthening.

In Chakaria, Bangladesh, a 20-year participatory action research initiative focused on building capacity in existing rural self-help organizations (SHOs) to promote community health. The intervention, which began in 1994, employed a self-help conceptual framework combined with training, health literacy programs, and participatory planning and monitoring mechanisms (Bhuiya et al., 2016). The sustained engagement with SHOs led to increased organizational functionality, more regular meetings, and systematic implementation of health action plans. Longitudinal data from the Health and Demographic Surveillance System comparing intervention and control areas from 1999 to 2015 revealed substantially greater increases in immunization coverage, skilled birth attendance, facility deliveries, and sanitary latrine use in intervention communities. This case demonstrates that working through existing community structures, rather than creating parallel systems, can lead to sustained improvements in health service utilization over decades (Bhuiya et al., 2016).

Addressing the critical issue of pesticide-related self-harm and suicide in rural India, researchers employed community-based participatory research in the Sundarban region of West Bengal. The intervention engaged 140 farmers, 124 Gram Panchayat members, and 23 Panchayat Samity members through facilitated focus group discussions to co-develop culturally appropriate prevention strategies (Chowdhury et al., 2013). The participatory process resulted in culture-fair information, education, and communication (IEC) materials that achieved 78-98% culture fairness ratings and 80-100% usefulness ratings from target groups. Following implementation, a definite reduction in deliberate self-harm incidents was observed in the intervention area. The success was attributed to genuine community partnership, shared responsibility, and active engagement of local healthcare providers in the preventive process (Chowdhury et al., 2013).

The Kannapuram Model in northern Kerala, India, represents an innovative community participatory approach to cancer control. This intervention addressed the challenge of late-stage breast cancer presentations resulting from a lack of awareness and fear among women in rural communities (Parambil et al., 2025). By implementing a community-based model that engaged local governance structures (Grama Panchayat) and community members in awareness raising and early detection efforts, the intervention successfully improved breast cancer outcomes through earlier diagnosis and treatment initiation (Parambil et al., 2025).

In Pakistan, a novel intervention employed Conditional-Collective-Community-Based Incentives (C3Is) to address polio vaccine refusals in high-risk areas of Bannu and Karachi. The participatory approach involved forming Community Health Committees that conducted community sessions and home visits, while leveraging community influencers to change social norms around immunization (Tabassum et al., 2025). The intervention successfully achieved targeted reductions of 30% and 50% in vaccine refusals across two implementation phases, demonstrating that community-driven approaches can effectively address vaccine hesitancy by dispelling myths and fostering collective behavioral change (Tabassum et al., 2025).

A community-based participatory action research project in rural southern India evaluated an after-school resilience-focused intervention through cross-continent collaboration that emphasized local voices in program development and evaluation (Shadowen et al., 2020). Youth surveyors played key roles in data

collection, strengthening both the research quality and community empowerment outcomes. The study provided a roadmap for how community engagement can simultaneously strengthen research rigour and empower communities, yielding valuable knowledge on participant demographics, satisfaction, and program impacts (Shadowen et al., 2020).

#### **4.2 Agriculture and Food Security**

Participatory research approaches have proven highly effective in improving agricultural productivity and food security across South Asia, with particular success in crop variety selection, integrated rural development, and sustainable farming practices.

In Nepal, participatory research approaches rapidly improved household food security through Participatory Variety Selection (PVS) and Integrated Rural Development (IRD) programs (Joshi et al., 2012). The intervention not only achieved measurable improvements in food security outcomes but also identified the specific policy changes required to institutionalize participatory research and extension approaches within government systems. This dual focus on immediate outcomes and systemic change is a critical success factor for long-term sustainability (Joshi et al., 2012).

A case study from eastern Uttar Pradesh, India, examined the impact of participatory rice breeding research on women farmers in submergence- and drought-prone villages (Paris et al., 2008). The participatory varietal selection process involved women farmers directly in screening improved rice varieties for stress-prone environments. Beyond achieving the adoption of improved varieties, the intervention enhanced women's decision-making authority regarding varietal choice, seed acquisition, and crop management. This empowerment dimension demonstrates how participatory agricultural research can simultaneously address productivity and gender equity objectives (Paris et al., 2008).

In coastal Bangladesh, participatory research focused on increasing cropping intensity through improved coastal water resource use. The intervention engaged farming communities in identifying constraints and co-developing solutions for utilizing saline and brackish water resources more effectively. The participatory approach enabled context-specific innovations that increased agricultural productivity in challenging coastal environments.

An innovative participatory intervention in coastal Kerala, India, addressed the dual challenge of water hyacinth infestation and agricultural productivity (Abba et al., 2025). Using Participatory Rural Appraisal tools, including resource mapping and seasonal calendars, researchers worked with farmers, fishermen, and community leaders to develop community-led strategies for converting water hyacinth into biofertilizer. The intervention achieved a 20% increase in crop yield over a four-month trial period while simultaneously addressing an environmental problem. This case exemplifies how participatory approaches can identify win-win solutions that enhance both livelihoods and ecosystem sustainability, aligning with multiple Sustainable Development Goals (Abba et al., 2025).

#### **4.3 Water Resource Management**

Water scarcity and quality challenges across South Asia have been successfully addressed through community participatory approaches that emphasize local ownership and sustainable management.

In District Karak, Pakistan, a participatory intervention focused on sustainable rural water supply in the context of severe water scarcity (Rasool et al., 2024). The study engaged 330 respondents, including community members, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), and executing agencies, through interviews and participatory planning processes. Applying Social Capital Theory, the research demonstrated that active community engagement facilitated by CBOs and executing agencies was the linchpin for sustained water supply success. The synergy between community satisfaction and engagement

created a resilient water future, offering a blueprint for mitigating water scarcity through genuine community participation (Rasool et al., 2024).

The Rural Village Water Resources Management Project (RVWRMP) in Nepal pioneered community-driven multiple-use water services (MUS) in the remote Far and Mid-Western development regions (Rautanen et al., 2014). Operating since 2006, the project employed participatory planning through Water Use Master Plans and a Step-by-Step approach embedded within local government structures. Key entry points included decentralization, participation, and empowerment, with a focus on household and community-level changes. The intervention successfully addressed poverty and livelihoods in water-scarce regions by providing water for both domestic and productive uses, demonstrating that integrated water management approaches can simultaneously address multiple community needs (Rautanen et al., 2014).

In Bangladesh, participatory planning for community management of fisheries demonstrated clear improvements in management outcomes (Sultana et al., 2008). The intervention established local fisheries management systems through genuine community participation, with detailed involvement at multiple stages of planning and implementation. The success was directly linked to the adoption of good practices in participatory planning, showing that process quality matters as much as technical solutions in natural resource management (Sultana et al., 2008).

#### **4.4 Disaster Risk Reduction**

Community participatory approaches have proven effective in building disaster resilience and reducing risks in South Asia's disaster-prone regions.

A comparative case study in Kathmandu Valley, Nepal, employed participatory action research in community-based disaster risk reduction efforts in one rural and one urban neighbourhood (Ruszczuk et al., 2020). Female-led disaster risk management groups worked in partnership with local authorities and the National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET) to identify hazards and implement small-scale mitigation activities. The intervention addressed both catastrophic risks like earthquakes and everyday hazards such as fire, as well as livelihood concerns, including landslides and drainage problems. The participatory action research demonstrated clear evidence of women's empowerment and capacity building, though sustainability was noted to depend on local authorities incorporating these initiatives into formal policies (Ruszczuk et al., 2020).

In Pakistan, a community participation framework for post-disaster resettlement was developed and applied following major disasters. The framework emphasized community involvement in resettlement planning and implementation, recognizing that top-down approaches often fail to meet affected communities' actual needs and priorities. The participatory approach improved both the appropriateness and acceptance of resettlement solutions.

#### **4.5 Women's Empowerment and Social Development**

Participatory approaches have been particularly effective in advancing women's empowerment and addressing gender inequalities across South Asia.

A participatory action research project in Nepal focused on community mediation, particularly for women and low-caste participants (McCrea, 2014). The intervention led to increased self-esteem, active participation in community processes, and confidence in providing facilitation and leadership in local conflicts. Participants discovered their own strengths and capabilities for responding to social problems, experiencing empowerment, education, and reflectiveness. The project influenced policy outcomes, including increased environmental protection enforcement and preservation of funding for prisoners'

educational programs, demonstrating how community-level empowerment can catalyze broader systemic changes (McCrea, 2014).

In Pakistan, participatory approaches to women's socio-economic empowerment documented clear empowerment gains through impact assessments that linked community methods to positive outcomes (Khan et al., n.d.). The interventions recognized the importance of participatory approaches in achieving meaningful empowerment rather than imposing external definitions of women's needs and priorities (Khan et al., n.d.).

CARE's public health work in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh employed community-organising frameworks that led to profound empowerment outcomes, captured in participants' own words: "Now, I am Empowered. Now, I am a Woman with Spirit" (Saxon et al., 2021). This case illustrates how participatory health interventions can achieve transformative social outcomes beyond their immediate health objectives.

#### **4.6 Community-Driven Development Programs**

Large-scale community-driven development programs have demonstrated significant impacts across multiple outcome domains in South Asia.

Afghanistan's National Solidarity Program (NSP) represents one of the most extensively evaluated community-driven development initiatives globally. A randomized controlled trial across 500 villages assessed the program's impacts on multiple outcomes (Beath et al., 2015). The NSP created democratically elected community development councils and funded small-scale development projects designed and implemented by villagers. The rigorous evaluation demonstrated positive impacts on access to drinking water and electricity, enhanced acceptance of democratic processes, improved perceptions of economic well-being, and more positive attitudes toward women (Beath et al., 2015). This large-scale evidence demonstrates that community-driven development can achieve meaningful improvements across infrastructure, governance, and social dimensions simultaneously.

The institutionalization of participatory slum upgrading in Afghanistan from 2002-2016 provides important lessons for scaling participatory approaches (French et al., 2019). The case study documented methods for embedding participatory slum upgrading within government-led citywide and national programs, overcoming the limitations of piecemeal, ad-hoc upgrading projects. This institutionalization approach suggests pathways for moving participatory methods from pilot projects to systemic change (French et al., 2019).

### **5. Key Findings**

#### **Long-term engagement leads to sustained health improvements.**

Interventions that worked through existing community structures, such as self-help organizations in Bangladesh, produced lasting improvements in immunization, maternal health, and sanitation. Long-term partnerships were more effective than short term project

#### **Community ownership reduces health risks and harmful behaviours**

Participatory approaches in India and Pakistan successfully reduced pesticide self-harm and vaccine refusal by involving local leaders, farmers, and health committees in decision-making. When communities co-designed solutions, behavioural change was stronger and more acceptable.

#### **Local government involvement strengthens health outcomes.**

Health interventions that engaged local government institutions, such as the Grama Panchayat in Kerala, improved early cancer detection and treatment. Institutional support increased legitimacy and sustainability.

**Participatory research improves both agricultural productivity and empowerment.** Programs in Nepal and India showed that farmer participation in crop selection improved food security and adoption of stress-tolerant varieties. These approaches also strengthened women's decision-making power in agriculture.

**Context-specific solutions enhance environmental and livelihood outcomes.** Participatory interventions in coastal Bangladesh and Kerala addressed local resource challenges and increased crop productivity. Community knowledge helped generate practical and sustainable innovations.

**Strong social capital supports sustainable water management**

Water resource projects in Pakistan and Nepal showed that active community engagement and collaboration with local institutions improved long-term water access and management. Community satisfaction was closely linked to system sustainability.

**Process quality matters in natural resource management**

Fisheries management in Bangladesh demonstrated that genuine participation at all stages of planning and implementation improved governance outcomes.

**Participatory disaster risk reduction builds women's leadership**

Disaster management projects in Nepal strengthened women's confidence and leadership skills. However, sustainability required integration into formal government policies.

**Women's empowerment increases through active participation, not external direction.**

Participatory mediation and socio-economic programs in Nepal and Pakistan improved women's confidence, leadership, and social status. Empowerment was strongest when women directly shaped interventions.

**Community-driven development improves infrastructure, governance, and social attitudes.**

Afghanistan's National Solidarity Program showed measurable improvements in access to water, electricity, democratic participation, and attitudes toward women. Large-scale participatory programs can produce a multi-dimensional impact.

**Institutionalization supports scaling and sustainability**

Embedding participatory approaches into government systems, as seen in Afghanistan's slum upgrading initiatives, helps move from pilot projects to long-term structural change

## 6. Conclusion

This systematic review examined success cases of community participatory approaches across South Asia. The findings show that participatory interventions can produce measurable and sustained improvements in health, agriculture, water management, disaster resilience, women's empowerment, and community development. Across different countries and sectors, active community involvement contributed to better service use, improved livelihoods, stronger local institutions, and greater social inclusion.

Several common patterns were identified. Long-term engagement was essential for sustained impact. Programs that worked through existing community structures achieved more stable and lasting results than short-term or externally driven initiatives. Genuine community ownership strengthened acceptance, trust, and behavioural change. When people were directly involved in planning and decision-making, interventions were more relevant to local needs and more effective in practice.

The review also shows that participatory approaches are most successful when they combine technical solutions with social empowerment. Interventions that actively included women and marginalized groups improved not only sectoral outcomes but also confidence, leadership skills, and decision-making power.

This dual focus on development outcomes and empowerment increased the overall impact of programs. Institutional support emerged as another critical factor. When participatory approaches were integrated into local governance systems and supported by public institutions, they were more sustainable and scalable. Without such support, successful initiatives often remained limited to pilot projects. Overall, the evidence confirms that community participatory approaches are effective strategies for addressing complex development challenges in South Asia. When participation is meaningful, inclusive, and supported by long-term commitment and institutional integration, it can lead to sustainable and transformative change. Future policies and programs should prioritize community ownership, capacity building, and system-level integration to strengthen the long-term impact of participatory development efforts in the region.

## References

1. Abba, A. H., Hashim, N. B., & Rahman, M. A. (2025). A participatory approach to water hyacinth management: Enhancing livelihoods and ecosystem sustainability. *Environmental Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00267-025-02314-y>
2. Aziz, A., & Shams, M. (2011). Participatory action research as the approach for women's empowerment. *Action Research*, 9(3), 303--323. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476750310396952>
3. Beath, A., Christia, F., & Enikolopov, R. (2015). *The National Solidarity Program: Assessing the effects of community-driven development in Afghanistan*. Social Science Research Network. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2766812>
4. Bhuiya, A., Hanifi, S. M. A., Roy, N., & Streatfield, P. K. (2016). Unlocking community capability through promotion of self-help for health: Experience from Chakaria, Bangladesh. *BMC Health Services Research*, 16(Suppl 7), 705. <https://doi.org/10.1186/S12913-016-1865-9>
5. Burns, D. (2017). Deepening and scaling participatory research with the poorest and most marginalised. *European Journal of Operational Research*, 268(1), 249--259. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.EJOR.2017.11.025>
6. Chowdhury, A. N., Banerjee, S., Brahma, A., & Biswas, M. K. (2013). Participatory research for preventing pesticide-related DSH and suicide in Sundarban, India: A brief report. *International Scholarly Research Notices*, 2013, Article 427417. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2013/427417>
7. French, M., Hegazy, I. R., & Rojas, A. (2019). Institutionalizing participatory slum upgrading: A case study of urban co-production from Afghanistan, 2002--2016. *Environment and Urbanization*, 31(1), 209--230. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956247818791043>
8. Joshi, K. D., Devkota, K. P., Paudel, G. P., Khanal, N. P., Chaudhary, P., Gauchan, D., & Sthapit, B. R. (2012). Participatory research approaches rapidly improve household food security in Nepal and identify policy changes required for institutionalisation. *Field Crops Research*, 131, 40--48. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.FCR.2012.03.001>
9. Khan, R. E. A., & Noreen, S. (n.d.). Women's socio-economic empowerment through participatory approach: A critical assessment. *Pakistan Development Review*.
10. Khwaja, A. I. (2020). "Localization" in fragile spaces: A comparative networks evaluation of community-based programmes in Pakistan and Afghanistan. *Journal of Asian Public Policy*, 15(1), 103--122. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17516234.2020.1829355>
11. McCrea, K. T. (2014). "I'm a leader of all of them to tell the truth": Participatory action principles for uplifting social work research partners' identities. *Journal of Community Practice*, 22(1--2), 218--237.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10705422.2014.901997>

12. Parambil, N. A., Nair, M. K., & Leena, M. L. (2025). Community participatory approach in cancer control: "The Kannapuram Model" for breast cancer control in Northern Kerala, India. *WHO South-East Asia Journal of Public Health*, 14(1), 34--39. [https://doi.org/10.4103/WHO-SEAJPH.WHO-SEAJPH\\_122\\_24](https://doi.org/10.4103/WHO-SEAJPH.WHO-SEAJPH_122_24)
13. Paris, T. R., Singh, A., Luis, J., & Hossain, M. (2008). Assessing the impact of participatory research in rice breeding on women farmers: A case study in eastern Uttar Pradesh, India. *Experimental Agriculture*, 44(1), 97--112. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0014479707005923>
14. Rasool, G., Khan, M. A., Shirazi, S. A., & Ahmad, I. (2024). Empowering community participation for sustainable rural water supply: Navigating water scarcity in Karak District Pakistan. *Groundwater for Sustainable Development*, 25, Article 101269. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gsd.2024.101269>
15. Rautanen, S. L., van Koppen, B., & Wagle, N. (2014). Community-driven multiple use water services: Lessons learned by the Rural Village Water Resources Management Project in Nepal. *Water Alternatives*, 7(1), 160--177.
16. Ruszczyk, H. A., Upadhyay, B. K., Kwong, Y. M. C., Khanal, O., Bracken, L. J., Pandit, S., Bastola, R., & Guragain, S. (2020). Empowering women through participatory action research in community-based disaster risk reduction efforts. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 51, Article 101763. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.IJDRR.2020.101763>
17. Saxon, L., Makhoul, J., Akhter, S., Lopes, A., & Sibai, A. M. (2021). "Now, I am empowered. Now, I am a woman with spirit": Evaluating CARE's public health work through a community-organizing framework in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. *The International Quarterly of Community Health Education*, 42(3), 263--272. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0272684X20916624>
18. Shadowen, N. L., Varghese, M., Brown, E. L., Kuruvilla, A., & Hughes, T. L. (2020). A resilient research approach: Using community-based participatory action research in a rural area of India. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 48(8), 2656--2672. <https://doi.org/10.1002/JCOP.22429>
19. Sultana, P., & Thompson, P. (2008). Effectiveness of participatory planning for community management of fisheries in Bangladesh. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 86(1), 201--213. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JENVMAN.2006.12.027>
20. Tabassum, F., Zaidi, S., Iqbal, M., Khowaja, A. R., Khan, A. J., & Hussain, I. (2025). Creating cohesive communities: Using Conditional-Collective-Community-Based Incentives to change social norms on polio immunization in Pakistan. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 13, Article 1575319. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2025.1575319>
21. Wimalaratana, W., Otsuka, K., & Kajisa, K. (2017). Sustainable resource mobilization for community development in Sri Lanka: LEAD participatory poverty reduction experience. In K. Otsuka & K. Kajisa (Eds.), *Paths to the emerging state in Asia and Africa* (pp. 173--198). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-4259-1\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-4259-1_7)