

**COMMUNITY  
HEALTH  
IMPACT  
ASSESSMENT  
TOOL**

**Association for Social and Health Advancement (ASHA)**

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***“Seeking Change in the Lives of the Disadvantaged”***

The Association for Social and Health Advancement (ASHA) is a non-profit, non-political, non-government organization which, since its inception in 1997, has been working to improve the socio-economic and health status of disadvantaged communities.

ASHA facilitates formation of women's self-help groups as a means of socio-economic empowerment of women. This process of community health impact assessment was undertaken with members of Nabayan Mahila Samity, Chandamari Village and Nabajiban Mahila Samity, Fatebur Village in Block Suti I of Murshidabad District, West Bengal, India

*Association for Social and Health Advancement  
BE – 135, Sector - 1  
Salt Lake City  
Kolkata – 700 064  
Tel.: 91-33-2359 5475  
E-mail: [asha@cal3.vsnl.net.in](mailto:asha@cal3.vsnl.net.in)*

The template for this Community Health Impact Assessment Tool was developed by the Antigonish Town & County Community Health Board in Nova Scotia, Canada.

Community Health Impact Assessment is a process developed by the People Assessing Their Health (PATH) Network in Nova Scotia, Canada.

The process undertaken with ASHA was facilitated by staff of the Coady International Institute, St. Francis Xavier University, Nova Scotia, Canada

**May 25, 2003**

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## **OUR VISION OF A *HEALTHY COMMUNITY***

### ***In a healthy community there will be...***

- Improved economic conditions (adequate opportunities for income generation)
- Regular, nutritious food for everyone
- Good roads and better communication facilities
- Electrical supply in the village
- Availability of safe drinking water (tube wells with arsenic filters)
- A sanitary latrine for each family
- Education for all villagers
- Available and appropriate health care
- Healthy development of children
- Educated Panchayet representatives (local self-government)
- Health awareness for all
- Healthy environment
- Small families
- Opportunities for women's improvement

### **Factors that determine health:**

- Regular nutritious diet
- Healthy environment
- Sanitary latrines
- Safe drinking water (arsenic free)
- Good roads and better communication systems
- Health education
- Nearby health facility
- Preventing early marriage and early childbearing
- Good economic conditions (opportunity for income generation)
- Well planned small family (one or two children)
- Healthy attitudes
- Education
- Sports and culture activities
- Electricity for everyone
- Healthy mothers for healthy children

## THE STORY-TELLING PROCESS

To create this community health impact assessment tool, ASHA Community Organizers brought together women from two different villages in Murshidabad District, West Bengal. Sixteen women gathered over a three-day period.

Introductions were made and the purpose for the meeting was explained. The women were then asked to think about some stories that affected their health. A number of stories were told and one story was chosen for reflection through the “structured dialogue” story-telling process.

The story was analyzed using the following steps:

- The group was asked to identify or describe everything that happened in the story (the **what**). Careful attention was paid to not get into discussion of “why” things happened.
- The next step was to have the women look at each of the “what” elements and describe **why** these things happened.
- The third step was to discuss what these things mean about health (**so what**).
- A fourth step in the process, which looks at next steps (**now what**) was not included in the reflection at this time.

Following the story-telling process, the women were asked to go into small groups and identify all of the factors that contribute to health and well-being.

The next activity was to ask the groups to imagine what a healthy community would look like and to draw a picture of this, using words and diagrams. This would form the basis of their “vision of a healthy community”.

The small groups then shared their pictures (visions of a healthy community) with the whole group.

Back in the small groups, the women were asked to discuss and make a list of all the things that could be done to help achieve this vision.

A small group used the information generated in the women’s group meeting to create this community health impact assessment tool. It includes all of the suggestions made in the women’s gathering.

## STEP 1: ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

<b>Will _____ help us to make our community healthy in the following ways:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
• Improved agricultural practices (better seeds, fertilizers, small irrigation facilities)			
• Animal husbandry (poultry, cattle, goats)			
• Regular, nutritious food			
• Availability of safe drinking water (tube wells with arsenic filters)			
• Electrical supply in the village			
• Good roads			
• Better communication facilities			
• Telephone facilities in the village			
• Access to bank loans if necessary			
• Opportunities for starting new micro-enterprises			
• Running small shops to increase income			
• New economic opportunities for men, in the village			
• Promotion of savings (for emergencies, marriage of daughters, etc.)			
• Primary education for all			
• High school in the village			
• Non-formal education center for adults			
• Educational facilities for the disabled			
• Health sub-center in the village			
• Regular supply of medicines at the sub-center, through cooperation between Panchayet, health worker and villagers			

<b>Will _____ help us to make our community healthy in the following ways:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Comments</b>
• Hospital near the village			
• Qualified doctor in the village			
• Trained health worker in the village			
• Two (2) trained traditional birth attendants (TBAs) in the village			
• ICDS Center (child development center) in the village			
• Health awareness programs for members of the community			
• Awareness programs regarding benefits of having a small family			
• Awareness programs for preventing early marriage and dowry			
• Promotion of smokeless chullahs and sanitary latrines through cooperation between Panchayet and villagers			
• Presence of women's groups and clubs			
• Vocational training for women			
• Planting of trees			
• Sanitary latrine for each family			
• Keeping roads clean			
• Space for sports and cultural activities			
• Educated Panchayet representatives (local self-government)			

- Looking back at how the proposed project will affect the different things you have discussed, how do you think the project in general will contribute to the overall well-being and health of the community?
- Are there any special things to be considered?
- Is there anything else that can be done to make this project better?

## STEP 2: NEXT STEPS

When you have decided what other things need to be done to make this project better, below you can list what the steps are, who is responsible, etc.

Next Step (What)	Who to Involve	When	Person Responsible	Report Back (by when)