Seminar on
Community Engagement:
A Concept in Search of a Definition

SPEAKER
DR ASIYA ODUGLEH-KOLEV

WHEN?
08th August 2019
(Thursday)
11.00 am – 12.30 pm

WHERE?
Level 1, UNU-IIGH Building,
HUKM Medical Complex
Jalan Yaacob Latiff, Cheras, Kuala Lumpur

AGENDA
10.45am – Registration
10.55am – Director’s welcome note
11.00am – Seminar
12.30pm – Lunch and networking


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Please refer to the next page for the seminar’s abstract

Asiya Odugleh-Kolev is currently responsible for the Department of Integrated Health Services work on community engagement for quality, people-centred and resilient health services. She is normally based in Geneva at WHO headquarters and while at UNU-IIGH will be consolidating the community engagement portfolio that she holds. During her time at WHO, Asiya has worked across a range of communicable disease programmes applying Communication-for-Behavioural-Impact (COMBI) - WHO’s adaptation of integrated marketing communications for behavior change. In 2008, she joined the emergency programme where she focused on integrating community engagement into epidemic response for which she was awarded Honorary Membership of the Faculty of Public Health, UK.

Asiya comes from a multi-disciplinary background that includes; anthropology; health communication; journalism; nursing; public health; social mobilization; and the science of adult learning. Her interests are in health system reform and identifying pathways to policy recommendations and options that support the emergence of people-centred health systems that contribute to the health and well-being of its own workforce and the populations they serve.
ABSTRACT

Despite four decades of health programme implementation experiences ranging from immunization to maternal and child health and, more recently health emergencies, that have all highlighted the critical need to engage with health service users, stakeholders and local populations - there is still no universally agreed definition of “community engagement”. Yet, community engagement is increasingly being referred to as fundamental to effective primary health care (PHC), a pre-requisite for universal health coverage (UHC) and indispensable to achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

As an emerging technical area of interest for global health, community engagement bridges: health systems; health workforce; service delivery; and essential public health functions. It therefore incorporates important dimensions of public health practice, clinical care, community development, family and community support as well as patient and stakeholder engagement and is underpinned by multiple disciplines that cross the medical, social sciences as well as the humanities. In both form and practice community engagement is interdisciplinary and interprofessional– which is probably why a definition has remained elusive and ambiguity persists.

This seminar will introduce WHO's efforts on community engagement for quality, people-centered, integrated and resilient health services (CEQ) which was developed following the 2014 Ebola Viral Disease in West Africa in a technical collaboration between the Service Delivery and Safety Department at WHO-HQ and the WHO Regional Office for Africa.

The CEQ incorporates a definition of community engagement that acknowledges the physiological, emotional and social interconnection of people in the context of delivering and receiving health care across diverse settings and health systems. As such, community engagement is poised to play an important and re-imagined role in improving health system performance, responsiveness and resilience.