

The Ladder of Community Participation:

**A framework for engaging
communities**

What is community engagement?

efforts that promote a mutual exchange of information, ideas and resources between community members and public agencies



Why is community engagement important?

- **Build trust and credibility**
- **Tap community skills, resources and ideas**
- **Get feedback on proposed strategies**
- **Harness community as a powerful advocate**

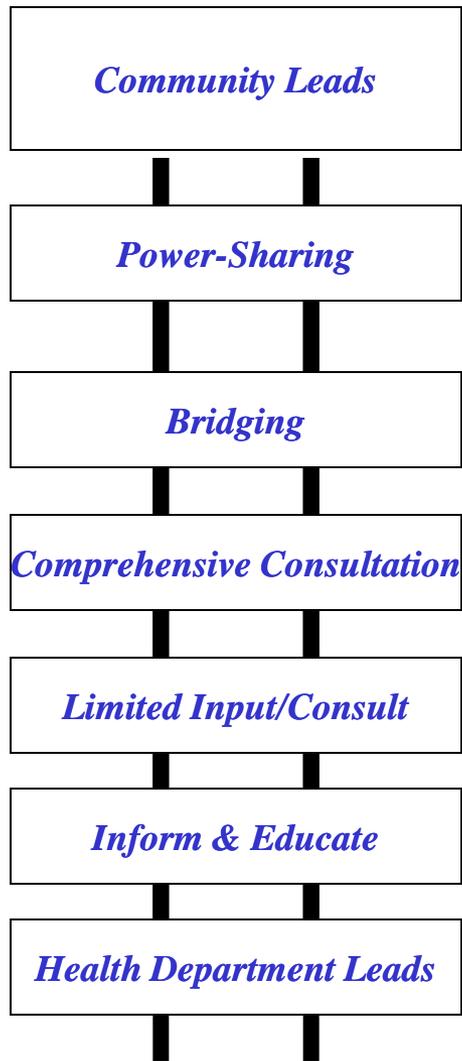
Community engagement is not new to public health



The Ladder of Community Participation is...

- A conceptual framework
- Describes a range of strategies
- Organizes them by degree of community and government involvement, decision-making and control

LADDER OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION



Government Leads

Health Department initiates and directs the community to act



Inform & Educate

HD provides education to the community

Fight the Bite
Reduce the Risk of West Nile Virus

Important things you can do:
West Nile virus is a disease spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes transmit West Nile virus and you cannot get West Nile virus from a person. Mosquitoes are most active at dusk and dawn.
Wear long sleeves, pants and socks when mosquitoes are biting.
Avoid standing water if possible.
Don't touch dead birds.
Use a repellent containing the ingredient DEET.

For health information, contact Contra Costa Health Services at 925-938-7000.

7/27/04

Evitar los Piquetes
Reducir el riesgo de contraer el virus de las enfermedades transmitidas por insectos que usted puede hacer:

REPARAR las mallas de las ventanas y puertas para prevenir que los mosquitos entren a su negocio.
SE camisa manga larga y pantalones largos si tiene que salir cuando hay mosquitos presentes.
Limite la cantidad de tiempo afuera durante el anochecer y amanecer.
Evite estar cerca de los peces que comen larvas de mosquitos y acerca el control de mosquitos, llame a Contra Costa Health Services al 925-938-7000.
Contra Costa Health Services
www.contracostahs.org

5/4/04

Limited Input/Consult

HD asks community members for *periodic* input on *specific* topics

Bay Point Town Hall Meeting

When: November 16th, 2005

Where: Riverview Middle School
215 Pacifica, Bay Point
6-8 p.m.

Come and talk to local officials about:



Dinner will be served!
Free Childcare!
Raffle!

- Advocating for Spanish Media Alerts or Notifications
- Input from Community Residents on outreach strategies and changes



Do You Know What the
Emergency Warning System Is?

Most people don't. Be part of the solution!

Comprehensive Consultation and Influence

HD asks community members for *ongoing* and *more substantive* input



Bridging

Community member roles become institutionalized in the agency, creating a pathway for *mutual* information sharing and feedback



Power-Sharing

Community members and HD define & solve problems together



Community Leads

Community members initiate and direct the effort

Organizing Milestone: Contra Costa Warning System Implemented!

APEN VOICES 3

APEN's Laotian Organizing Project members celebrated the implementation of the nation's first multilingual warning system in Contra Costa County in December, a direct result of seven years of persistent community organizing. Laotian residents can

now receive emergency information in the language they speak at home, whether it is Lao, Khmu, Mien, or Hmong, through a special speaker box attached to their home phone.

Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia, Richmond Mayor Irma Anderson, and other officials joined LOP members at the home of LOP member Thongsoun Phuthama where the first box was installed. "This is a victory that will not only benefit the Laotian community, it will benefit everybody," said Thongsoun referring to the County's plans to expand the system to Spanish and other languages. The system is also touted as a model for similar communities around the nation.

Hurricane Katrina revealed the tragic consequences that entire communities suffer when they are not part of the emergency plan. In Richmond seven years ago, a major

chemical explosion at the Chevron refinery released toxic plumes of smoke and gas. Nearby residents were not effectively notified of emergency procedures, especially limited English speaking households, and thousands were affected and sent to local hospitals.

Given the sheer number of toxic facilities and industry-related emergencies in the County, the Laotian community determined the existing system as unacceptable and a serious threat to the community's health. LOP members organized to correct the problem and, after seven years of organizing and pressure, the implementation of the system is a testament to their vision and perseverance. "This was the first organizing campaign led and run by the Laotian community and to finally see the results is a huge victory for the community," said APEN organizer Torm Nompraseurt.



LOP leaders celebrate campaign victory!

If you live in Contra Costa County you may be eligible

Receive emergency notifications, in Lao, Mien, Khmu, Hmong

If you are interested in participating in this important program please contact:

Community Coordinator
Yien Saechao at
510-708-9269 or
E. Hiew Lee 510-685-0230



It's as easy as 1, 2, 3

- 1 Contact your community coordinator
- 2 Sign-up for Caller ID through the phone company
- 3 Receive a special **FREE** Emergency Notification Caller ID box to have installed in your home

Contra Costa County Office of the Sheriff's Community Warning System program. Working together with Contra Costa Health Services and The Laotian Organizing Project to help keep your family safe and secure.

Essential Ingredients to Success

- Shared and articulated agency vision
- Incorporated in mission and values
- Strategic decision-making, identifying “bridge issues”
- Flexible organizational systems
- Supportive political leaders
- Experienced staff

How can the Ladder be used?

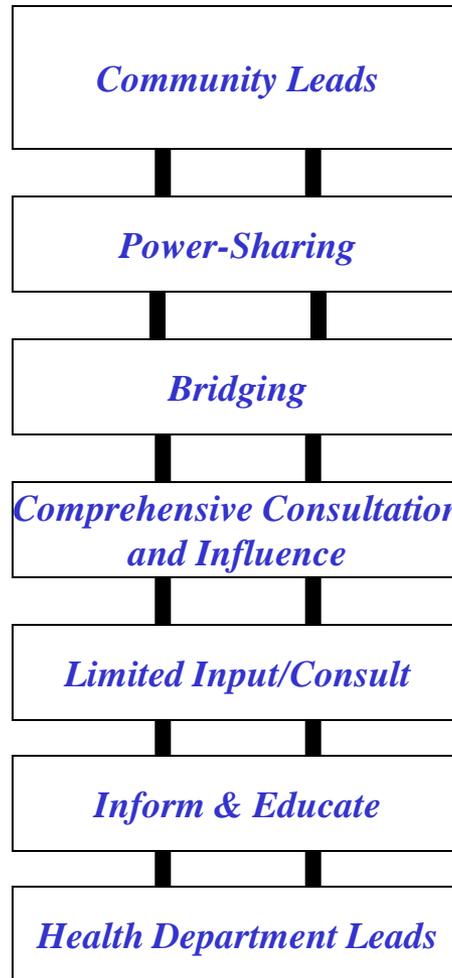
- Bring together diverse disciplines
- Discuss our community engagement work
- Describe successful strategies
- Clarify LHD role and limitations



How else can the Ladder be used?

- **A tool to evaluate existing engagement efforts**
- **To identify strategies for new issues**
- **To trigger discussions about expectations, roles and decision-making**

LADDER OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION



Thanks to Contra Costa Health Services for providing the resources and support to create this Ladder and for supporting community engagement approaches throughout the agency.

