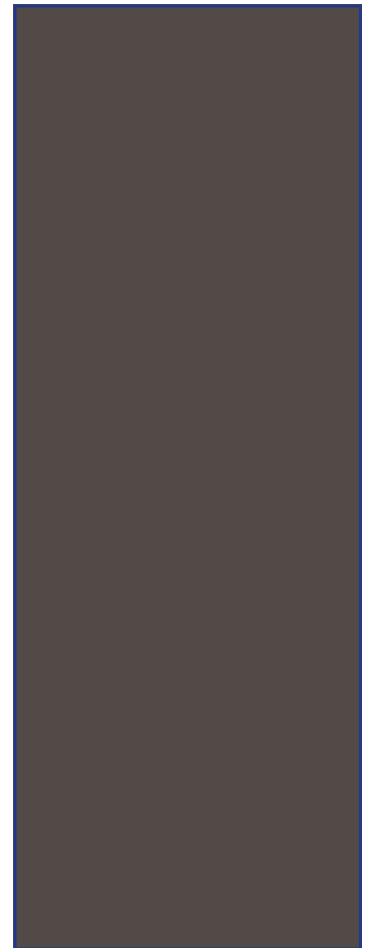




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The Consensus Approach

*Health promotion through
Community Health Clubs*



Creating a Culture of Health

The most effective way to reduce the incidence of diarrhoea is to create a completely hygienic environment, which all members of the community support. However, this involves considerable effort on the part of housewives and mothers, which can result in a lack of commitment to carrying out the necessary tasks. Promoting a 'culture of health' means that healthy living becomes highly valued, bringing about behaviour change, through peer pressure and the desire to conform.

Community Health Clubs

Community Health Clubs (CHCs) help to promote this culture of health because people meet regularly to learn about and discuss ways to improve hygiene. The meetings are properly organized sessions with a registered membership, which should represent at least 80% of households in the community. Private behaviour then becomes a public concern, with the general consensus from the critical mass ensuring that all individuals are discouraged from poor hygiene behaviour in favour of agreed and accepted standards and norms.

Weekly meetings of CHCs can address up to 30 different topics over a six month period. Each session requires members to practice their new learning at home. This can involve simple changes like covering stored water or using a ladle. More demanding challenges include building latrines, which requires effort and resources but is the natural culmination of such behaviour change and comes from within the community rather than being externally imposed.

