Identifying Community Partners

In Task 2-3 and 2-4, you learned more about what the community thinks about mosquitoes and the mosquito problem. Now it is time to identify some community partners. A community partner is any resource that has the potential to improve the quality of life within a community. Examples of community partners are:

People. Health workers, school staff, doctors, and teachers all have knowledge that could be helpful for the team during your research.

Places. Hospitals, health centers, libraries, police stations, and community centers all have information that could be helpful for the team during your research.

Community organizations and associations. Organizations and associations are groups of people that are working together around a common goal.

Government agencies. The Ministry of Health, or Department of Health have information that could be helpful for the team during your research.

In this task, the team will be focusing on the following questions from the question map in Task 1-10: Who are local people, organizations, and associations that can provide valuable information related to this problem?

In this task, the team will identify some local community partners that could help us better understand the problem question: How can we ensure health for all from mosquito-borne diseases?

Go to the Task 2-5 folder and get the Identifying Community Partners instructions, Meet the Team reading, and Data Sheet. There is only one version of this task.

1. As a team, read the Meet the Team reading about why it is important to identify and work with partners. Have each person state one important reason why it is important to identify and work with partners during research.

2. Use the instructions and data sheet in the task folder to develop a list of team partners.

3. Identify whether any of the community partners are within the research site map you created in Task 2-1. If so, mark and identify those on your research map.

4. If the community partners are mainly outside of your research site map, consider making a new map that is focused specifically on the community partners. Plot the locations of all partners on a community map.

Hooray! You completed Task 2-5. Check it off the task list. Go to Task 2-6!
Task 2-5 Identifying Community Partners Instructions

1. As a team, work together to start making a list of different community partners the team should use in your research.

2. Brainstorm a list of individual people in the community who could possibly help provide information for questions on the question map from Task 1-10.

3. Have team members ask their family, friends, and people in the community to help come up with some names of people, organizations, or agencies.

4. Do some research online, in local phone books, and by calling different organizations to find out what people, places, organizations, and agencies exist in your community that can help you learn more about mosquitoes. Examples include:
   - School or community center staff could have information about mosquitoes around the school.
   - Parents of team members might have professions that involve the mosquito problem.
   - Hospitals
   - Health centers
   - Community centers
   - Libraries
   - Police stations
   - Parks
   - Schools
   - Universities and colleges
   - School organizations
   - Ministry of Health
   - Department of Health
   - Department of Human Services

5. Compile a team list. Use a data table as needed.

6. Write a brief description of how the person, organization, or agency could be helpful to the team.

7. Determine how the team could contact the person, place, organization, or agency to get information from them.

8. With your team leader, develop a contact plan for reaching out to people in your community.
## Task 2-5 Identifying Community Partners

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<tr>
<th>Community Partner</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>How it could be helpful to team</th>
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Why is it important to identify and work with partners in your research?

David Pecor - Research Technician - Walter Reed Biosystematics Unit (WRBU)

Understanding mosquitoes and the transmission of diseases is very complicated. It is essential to identify partners you can work with to help one another. This helps us all work as a team to combat this problem on a large scale. We assemble our partners by first identifying experts in different parts of the problem. Then we work with each partner to choose the experts we think are appropriate for the team. We will have leaders in mosquito identification, disease analysis, geographic information systems (GIS) and data management. Each partner of the team is responsible for a key area. However, we all need to provide information to one another in order to be successful. What partners in your local community could you work with on your mosquito research?

Meera Venkatesan - Malaria Technical Advisor - President’s Malaria Initiative - United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Mosquito-borne disease is a global issue. This means we must partner with people all over the planet to be successful. Important partners in my work are global groups like the World Health Organization. They provide us very good global guidance on malaria control. However, each country has its own context and specific situation to take into account. This means we must partner and work with people in each country where we have projects. We must make sure to share all of the evidence with our partners in these countries. This will help them make the most informed decisions. They then help us measure the progress of the project in their country. This helps us as a team make any changes to the program, as needed. We could only do this with the help of partners and a team. What partners in your local community could you work with on your research?

Rusty Low - Senior Earth Scientist - Institute for Global Environmental Strategies

As individuals we tend to think only about what we want when working on a research project. It is important to realize that a team should always bring in different partners. The partners will bring in many more perspectives to your work. This shared knowledge is greater than what any one individual or team brings to a project. Diverse voices create strong outcomes! When you are in charge of a project, your personal vision might not make it into a final product. It is important to trust in the skill of your team and partners. Recognize that each viewpoint has importance, which needs to be part of the conversation. What partners in your local community could you include in your research conversation?
Kelly Bennett - Biologist - Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI)

It is important to bring together people from different fields of mosquito research and to collaborate together to advance scientific understanding. The time should be taken to listen to views and ideas and to seek further scientific evidence when an important piece of information is insufficiently supported.

Lee Cohnstaedt - Research Entomologist - United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Vector-borne pathogens such as West Nile virus, malaria, and dengue have complicated transmission cycles that include animals, humans, insects, and pathogens. To study the complete cycle requires veterinarians, doctors, microbiologists, entomologists, ecologists, and a whole team of scientists. By working together, different perspectives and knowledge bases can be combined to provide new insight for a problem. If people remain open, a new strategy will likely emerge, which will be viewed (positively and negatively) by each individual. The ideas can be discussed among the scientists and a consensus best option or options can be pursued. However, during these discussions, all of the ideas should be considered, because some ideas lead to others and rarely will the first idea be the best. More discussion from more perspectives will provide the most solid path forward.

Bridget Giles - Research Assistant Professor - Virginia Modeling Analysis & Simulation Center at Old Dominion University

It is important to work with many different partners on a problem. For example, when thinking about something as simple as where to spray insecticide, we must work with city officials and city mosquito surveillance partners. The surveillance partners provide observation data such as the number of mosquitoes, species, and location collected. This data can then help officials make decisions about where and when to spray insecticides. We use numbers and science to help us make decisions, especially when people do not agree.