

## CSOs are a bridge for improved vaccine coverage and equity.

Coordination and connections between civil society and community based organizations (CSOs and CBOs, respectively), health care workers (HCWs), and volunteers help strengthen support for the immunization system and ensure consistent, clear information reaches families and communities. CSOs and CBOs may include grassroots organizations; women's or youth groups; religious, cultural, or community leaders; parent-teacher associations; farmer or worker groups; and other local figureheads to whom families turn to for trusted information beyond healthcare.

**HCWs and vaccinators** have a vital role to identify, reach, and vaccinate eligible children to protect them against childhood illnesses. HCWs build relationships and rapport with the local community, often traveling to local villages or seeing families at the health facility or health post. However, they are not always available to answer every question, which is where a trained community partner who is more consistently available can provide support.

**CSOs and CBOs** have a vital role in closing the gap between children who are vaccinated and those who are not. Ongoing, specific outreach requires time, resources, and a commitment to reach each child. When outreach efforts are focused on meeting the needs of specific zero-dose or under-immunized children and their families, children are more likely to be vaccinated, and trust grows between the community and the health care system, yielding benefits beyond improved vaccination coverage.

**Families and caregivers** confront many challenges when accessing vaccines for their children. Distance to the health facilities, lack of transport, and rumors and misinformation about vaccines can deter caregivers from seeking immunizations. For families to overcome these challenges, it takes time, effort, and innovative solutions to remove barriers, improve access to the health facility and vaccines, and to build confidence so that families and caregivers accept vaccines for their children.

