



# Wired International's Community Health Worker Training Program

*Because Community Health Begins with Knowledge*



## INTRODUCTION

*The old man with diabetes could have lived a near-normal life, but he knew nothing about his illness or how to control it. His end came early and painfully . . . and unnecessarily.*

*Her child had a fever, unbroken for days. She tried what she knew with cold tea and warm broth, and yet the child's condition grew worse. On the fifth day, the baby's breathing grew faint. The mother cried for the child and she cried for herself; she had no idea what to do.*

*Everyone in the village bore the same symptoms. Vomiting, diarrhea, severe muscle cramps. And thirst. They tried to drink, but they threw it up and their thirst became worse. They got weaker. And then the weakest, the children and the elderly, began dying. No one knew what to do, where to turn.*

Such scenes play out countless times a year in underserved communities, where doctors and nurses are scarce and where few medical services are available. At least half of the world's population cannot obtain essential health services, according to a **2017 report** from the World Health Organization. Low-resource communities are left alone to heal the sick, deliver children and address infectious and noninfectious illnesses — all with skills uninformed by the latest medical practices. And now, the COVID-19 pandemic has made conditions so much worse.

### What's the Solution? Community Health Workers

Community health workers (CHWs) are a paraprofessional corps of local people expertly trained and with proven success in providing a host of services that elevate the health of their community. According to a **USAID report**, every three seconds, a child's death is prevented in the developing world thanks to CHWs, who have contributed to a 37% decline in child mortality in the past 20 years. Along with providing basic clinical services they improve health behaviors such as adherence to HIV antiretroviral therapy, diabetes management and TB treatment completion, childhood immunization and early prenatal care. They offer health education and health surveillance and become the bridge between their communities and the formal health system.

*CHWs would help the old man learn about his diabetes and adopt a healthier lifestyle. They also might help him obtain appropriate medications.*

*CHWs would help the mother whose child suffers from a fever. They would assess for infection and offer basic treatment. Then CHWs would obtain medical assistance as the child's condition worsens.*

*CHWs, trained in health surveillance, would recognize the cholera attacking the village. They would quickly address the dehydration by administering oral rehydration therapy. CHWs would then promptly alert officials about the outbreak. That would bring help to this village and prepare nearby villages for the approaching disease.*

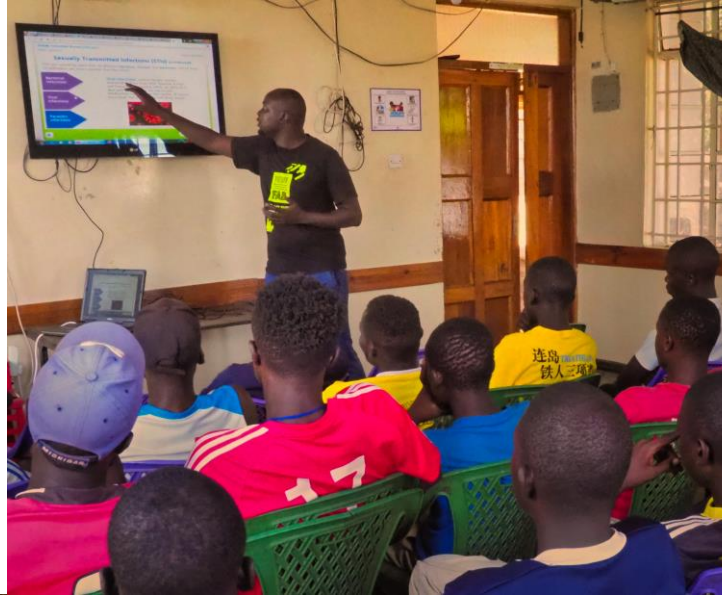


### WiRED Trains CHWs

WiRED International, a non-profit organization, has provided cost-free medical and health education in low-resource regions for the past two decades. It uses computers to deliver evidence-based health training programs to doctors, nurses and community members. WiRED's volunteer corps of medical professionals, IT experts and educators commit thousands of hours a year to help people in the world's poorest regions develop the knowledge that enables them to live healthier and longer lives.

WiRED recently has released a rigorous and comprehensive, World Health Organization-compliant curriculum to train CHWs around the globe. The program is housed in the School of Community and Global Health at CGU which is accredited by WASC. WiRED uses computer-based modules, taught in real-time by physicians and nurses, to groups of around 20 students. The 140-hour course covers health basics, patient assessment, clinical issues, health teaching and surveillance. Students who successfully complete a comprehensive final exam are awarded a certificate confirming course completion.

Each year, after completing their training, all community health workers are required to earn 50 continuing education units (CEU) to maintain their certification. This program (we call CHWE—continuing health worker education) enables CHWs to reinforce their knowledge and learn new skills. They stay current on scientific findings and the latest diagnostics and treatments for health conditions that may impact their communities.





## WiRED Emphasizes Prevention

WiRED stresses prevention in our general health program and in our CHW curriculum. Disease prevention by way of health education, lifestyle changes, medication management and vaccination outreach is central to WiRED's programs.

The wisdom of prevention is evident in the numbers: According to one [analysis](#), 90% of type 2 diabetes, 80% of coronary artery disease and 70% of stroke are attributable to poor lifestyle choices. Preventing a disease saves human suffering and expense, especially in regions where medical treatment is often inadequate. WiRED's extensive training on infectious diseases, also focuses on methods of disease prevention before symptoms may necessitate treatment.

## How is the training material delivered?

From its inception, WiRED has delivered evidence based, health education by way of computer technology, allowing us to reach further, faster and with more enhanced content. Technology enables us to deliver training modules globally. Technology also enables us to provide complete CHW training courses, with real-time instruction to students anywhere in the world.

WiRED's signature distribution program, called HealthMAP, allows quick module downloads eliminating the need to stay online. HealthMAP also makes it easy to copy modules and share them freely with others. So, with a temporary Internet or phone connection, someone can download the material, return to a location off the grid, then study it and share it with others. HealthMAP is entirely free, reducing economic barriers to health knowledge for all people.

## OUR PITCH

WiRED is training CHWs in underserved communities in Kenya, India, Armenia, Nicaragua and Peru and we need your help to continue this work and to expand the program to other regions in dire need of skilled health workers. Your support for training CHWs has a significant multiplier effect, because each CHW reaches an average of 750 people a year: Train one, improve the health of many.

We value your donation and, because our volunteers contribute thousands of work hours, we can direct 93% of your donation directly into our programs and materials. Your generosity will enable WiRED to expand our vital work to train CHWs. These trained paraprofessionals provide health care and education to all community members and especially to women and children, who are among the world's most vulnerable people.

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