

# CoRH [kɔ:r]



## Community-operated RH

*CoRH is a new concept for the promotion of reproductive health (RH). It is based on a strategy that places its roots in the community.*

### I. **Overview** – the underlying philosophy

In the 1960's, Chojiro Kunii, the founder of JOICFP brought forth the philosophy of "Human-centered Family Planning". This humanistic approach to family planning was developed to counter the perspective that was tended to be taken during those days regarding population issues, which was the macro perspective. Kunii stressed the importance of keeping the perspective on the individual well being, focusing on the promotion of family planning that aims to improve the health status and happiness of the people.

JOICFP has always had the basic principle that places its focus on the "needs of the individual". It was not an approach that took into account only family planning issues, but it was an approach that took into consideration the whole of the health of an individual regarding their sexuality and fertility, which was later called to be Reproductive Health (RH).

### II. **The Essence of CoRH – Community-operated RH**

With the above-mentioned approach as a foundation, from its inception in 1968, JOICFP has promoted "CoRH" projects – or "community-operated RH" projects in 26 countries from Asia, Latin America, and Africa Region. A community-operated project aims to create a movement for better health in the community, by the community people themselves. The community will become aware of its needs regarding health, and will unite their efforts to tackle their problems. This action will come voluntarily, from the people themselves.

A special aspect of this project is that though it places the foundation of activities in the community, the focus is kept on the individual. The final objective of the project is to create behaviour change in the individual regarding reproductive health, while at the same time creating an environment that enables this to happen.

#### **The Goal of CoRH**

The goal of **CoRH** is to improve the RH status of the individual with a focus on individual well being, through a strategy that bases its foundation on the initiative of the community people themselves.

### III. Core Strategy

The strategy to initiate such action is called the **CPI Engine (Community People's Initiative)**. The **CPI Engine** is a strategy to bring forth behaviour change in the individual. The individual does not exist alone; rather he/she is an integral part of a community. Standing on this fact, the CPI Engine works from both ends – from the community, and from the individual.

The initial and most primary step is to identify the needs of the community, create awareness regarding these issues, and then develop an environment where the people themselves can initiate action. The **CPI Engine** works by strengthening community networks and developing community groups, by pinpointing the key actors and providing them with appropriate information and skills. It develops a management and strategic system that allows the community people to take the initiative and then continue to manage activities themselves regarding RH for the betterment of their community.

The **CPI Engine** also looks at the individual. Appropriate information is provided through this community network, upgrading their knowledge, enabling the individual to make responsible choices. Focus is made on establishing an enabling social environment that allows this to happen. *(Please refer to attached CPI Engine paper for more information.)*

### IV. Other Major Characteristics

#### **Integration Approach**

The “integration” of various components is an additional key strategy of **CoRH**. The community is more receptive to issues that are familiar or with immediate needs. On the other hand, to approach directly with RH/FP services may be difficult. Therefore, by approaching the community with carefully selected other relevant health topics, it is possible to create an effective entry point into the community, and the people will become more receptive to RH/FP issues. Furthermore, the community can be continuously involved and the interest level may be maintained, by including these activities throughout the project duration.

#### **Towards Sustainability**

**CoRH** develops a mechanism for project sustainability at the community level. Sustainability is rooted in the people's needs. Therefore, CoRH bases its activities on the needs of the people from the initial stage, hence, why there is a high probability of these projects becoming sustainable. There is also a strong emphasis on the sustainability of the “programme” as in institutionalization of activities. The aim is for the community people who become involved to continue promoting activities for RH/FP, whether it is continued as it is, or it is revised and incorporated into other on-going activities related to health. Once these people are motivated and empowered, then it is expected that they will continue to act as RH/FP promoters in their community with their acquired skills and tools.

