

Community Based Participatory Action Research Workshop AIB MENA Conference

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March 14, 2019

9:00-11:30 a.m.





A group of people...

Linked by social ties

Sharing common perspectives or interests

Who may or may not share a geographic location

Community Members share a Common Characteristic or Goal

Examples:

- Common culture or ethnic heritage
- Where they live
- Similar age
- Speak the same language
- Religion

Communities are not homogeneous and seldom speak with one voice

What is community-based participatory action research (CBPAR)?

“A collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings.”

--W.K. Kellogg Foundation (2001)

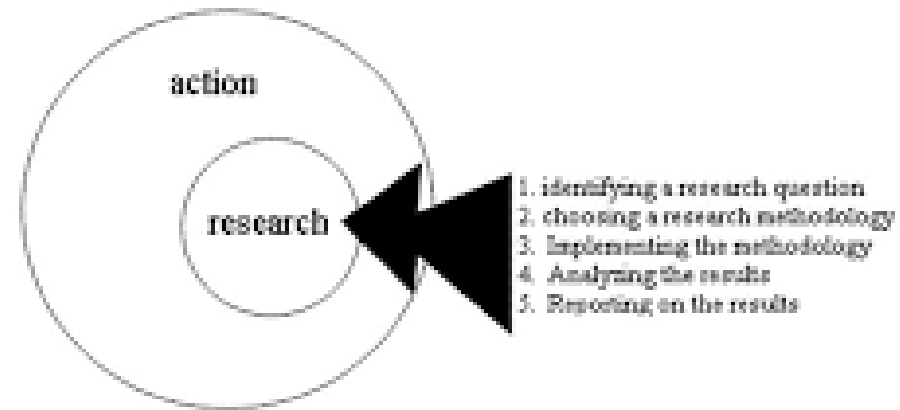
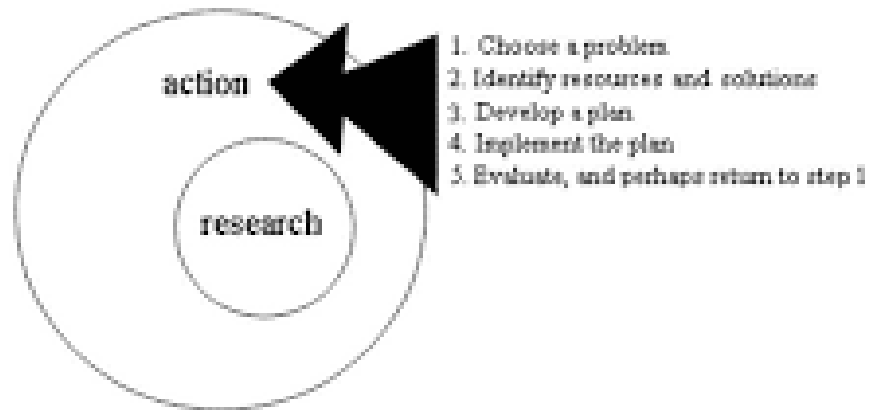


Community Based Participatory Action Research

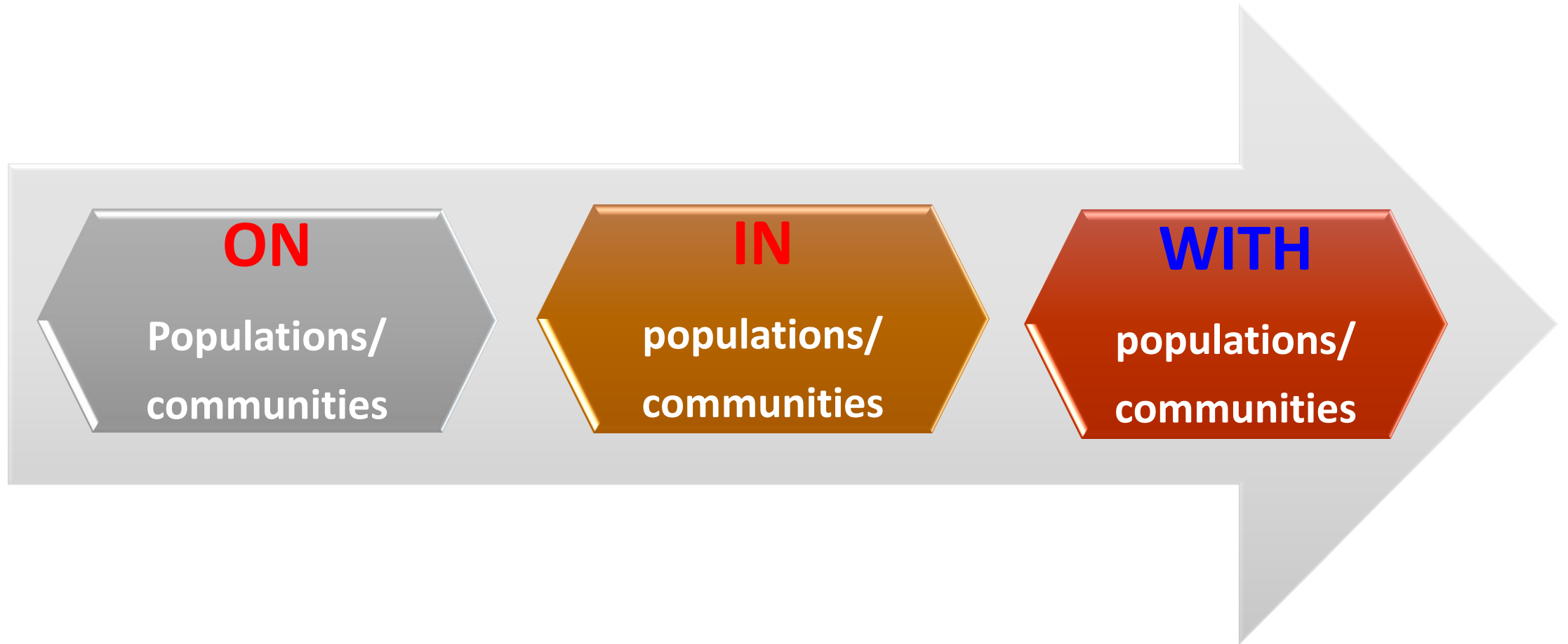
(CBPAR) is a collaborative approach to research that involves all stakeholders in the community, throughout the research process, from establishing the research question, to developing data collection tools, to analysis and dissemination of findings.



CBPAR links action with research (p.5)



Community engaged research continuum



Participant Continuum (p. 7)



What's in a Name?

- community-engaged research
- community-based participatory action research (CBPAR)
- community-based research
- community-partnered participatory research
- action research
- participatory research
- mutual inquiry
- community-academic collaborative research

Spectrum of Community-Engaged Research



More Intensive: Collaborating fully in all aspects of research, including defining study questions, writing the proposal, implementing the research project, analyzing the results and disseminating the findings (CBPR)

Moderately Intensive: Assisting with researcher-designed study; participant recruitment, data collection, providing feedback on aspects of study design & findings

Less Intensive: Assisting in discrete steps of a researcher-designed study, such as participant recruitment

CBPAR Orientation



Community Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) framework aims to address the practical concerns of people in a community and fundamentally changes the roles of researcher and who is being researched.

- CBPAR is an *orientation*, not a method. What distinguishes it from conventional research is:
 - the *methodological contexts* of the application of methods
 - the location of *power* in the stages of the research process
- (Cornwall and Jewkes 1995)

Community-Engaged Research

- May be used with both qualitative and quantitative methods
- Recognizes and builds on community strengths
- Characterized by principles that guide the research
- Requires partnership development



Characteristics of CBPAR

1. Collaborative, equitable partnership in all phases of research
2. Community is the unit of identity
3. CBPR builds on strengths and resources of community
4. CBPR fosters co-learning and capacity building
5. Balance between knowledge generation and benefit for community partners

Present day context of CBPAR

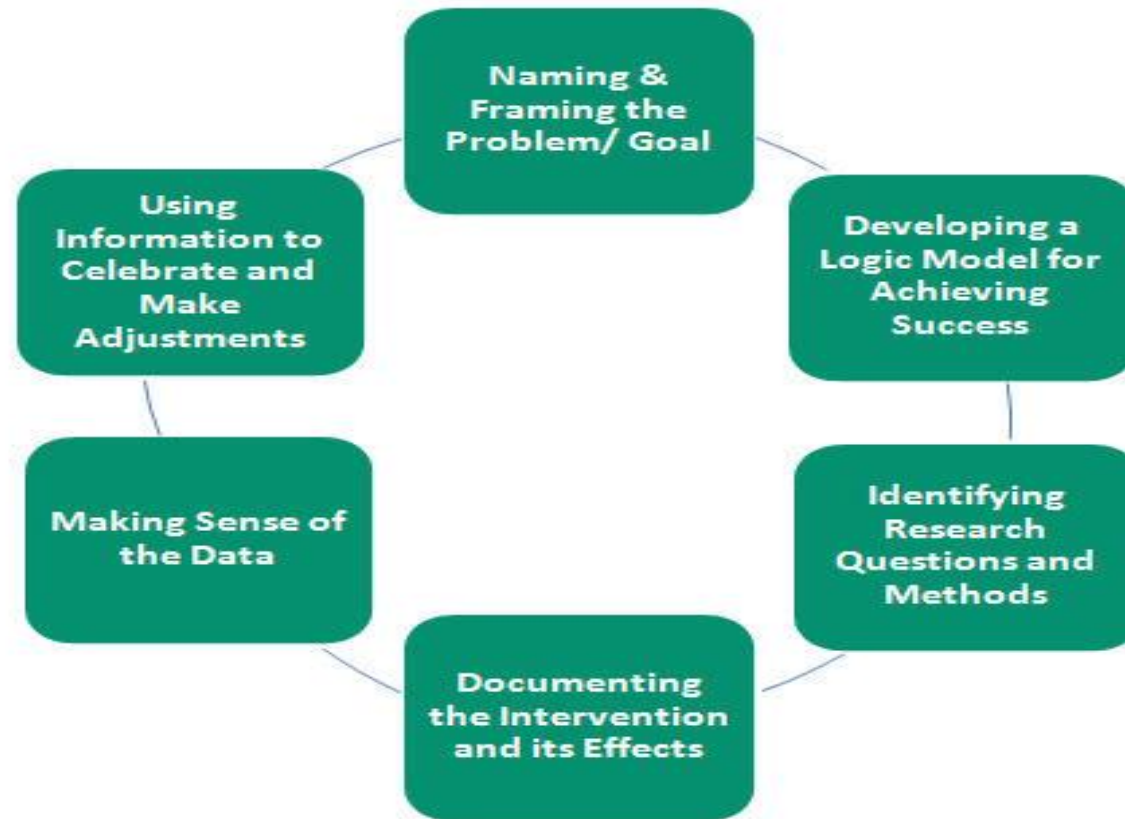
- CBPAR is inclusive of participatory research approaches with an explicit social change focus
- In social sciences may be referred to as participatory research or participatory action research
- CBPAR is practiced in:
 - Public Health
 - Medicine
 - Psychology
 - Sociology
 - Anthropology
 - Urban Planning
 - Social Science
 - Other disciplines



What Community Organizations bring to Community-Engaged Research

- Community-based organizations (CBO) have critical, useful and intimate understandings of the concerns, values, assets and activities in their communities.
- When CBOs are engaged as partners in research, they bring these perspectives to help shape and refine study questions, implementation strategies, and data collection plans.
- CBOs play an important role identifying how the study results may be applied to practice, and how the results can be used to shape future research directions.

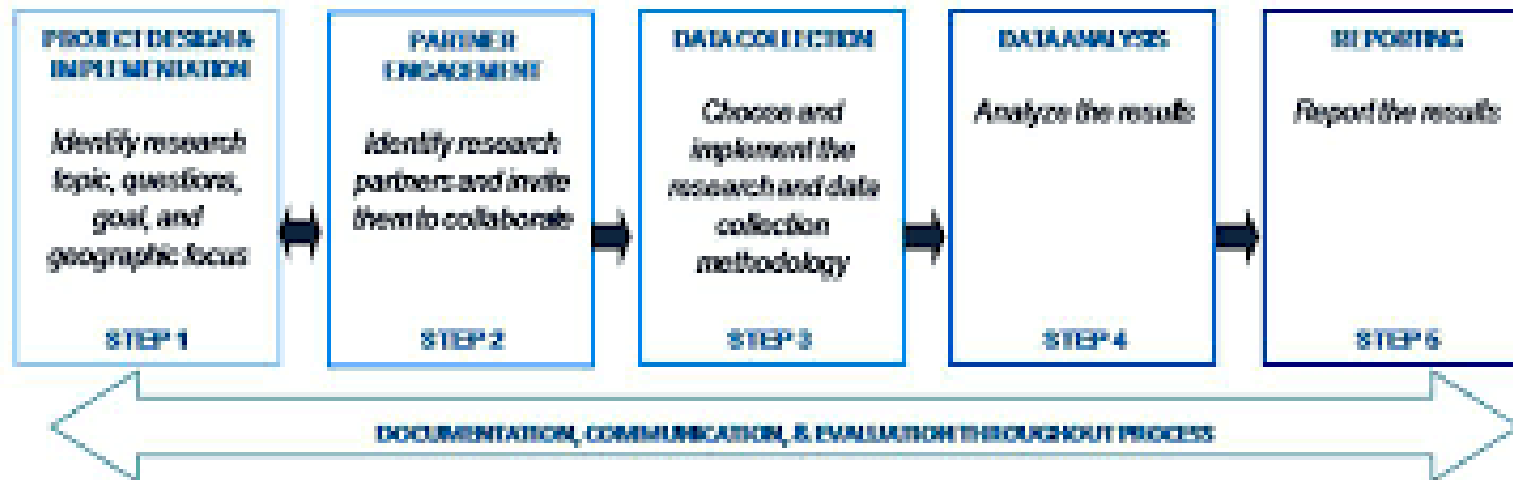
Planning a CBPAR Project : A Framework



A Framework for Community-Based Participatory Research

CBPAR Process (p. 13)

Community Based Participatory Action Research Project Process Model



Planning CBPAR project: initial considerations

- Staff
- Money
- Data
- Equipment and tools
- Partnerships and collaboration
- Expertise

The Case

- Development of nature tourism in the Windward Islands
- Explore how nature tourism could be instituted on 4 Windward Islands in the Carriibbean- St. Lucia, Grenada, Dominica, St. Vincent

Why PAR?

Many stakeholders were involved:

- government ministries, environmental and heritage groups, private business, farmers' cooperatives etc.

What has been done

- Multi-stakeholder national advisory councils were formed
- Search conferences took place

outcome: set of recommendations and action plans for carrying out sub-projects at the local community level.

What has been done (cont'd)

- Extended advisory groups formed on the islands
- National awareness activities and community sub-projects were implemented in some cases
- Regional project meetings:
project coordinators and key advisory members shared experiences, conducted self-evaluation, developed plans for maintaining the process.

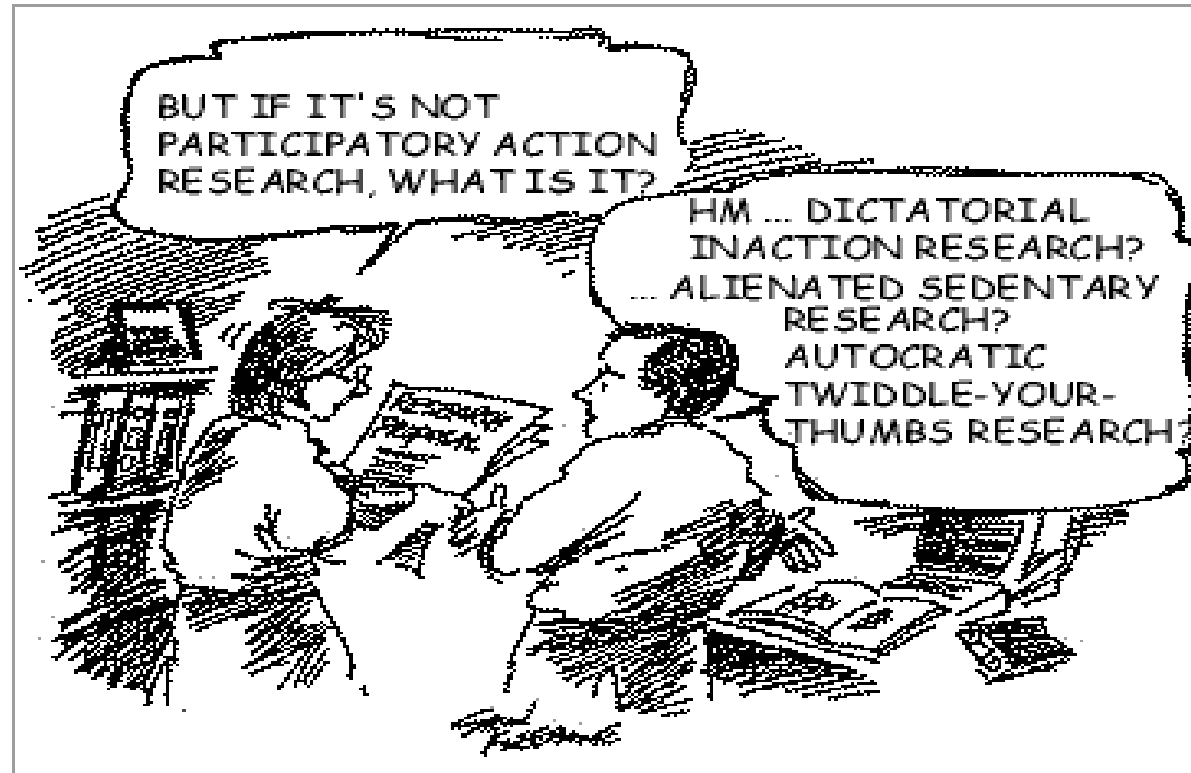
Results

- Varied on the different islands
- St. Vincent: successful, several viable local developments instituted.
- Grenada and St. Lucia: mixed outcomes
- Dominica: least successful, process curtailed by the government soon after search conference took place.

Why do the outcome differ?

- Willingness of the key government personnel to “let go” and allow the process to be jointly controlled by all participants
- Empower stakeholders, change existing power relations.
- Threats for some decision-makers
- Effort of collaborative group of citizens is required for accomplishment of many things.

PAR is considered an alternative to quantitative research in which the researcher “knows all”



Successful CBPR strives to achieve...

- Solutions for problems in accord with community priorities about concrete community concerns
- Community capacity-building
- Community empowerment
- Local community ownership
- Sustainable programs – beyond initial grant period
- Radical changes – screening and/or therapeutic strategies, health outcomes, policies
- Social justice
- Environmental justice

Advantages and Disadvantages of CBPAR (1 of 3)

Advantages

- Provides a way of solving some of the problems encountered with the other approaches.
- Poor people's views are elicited to shape plans and contribute to developmental strategies.

Disadvantages

- Impact of views on projects are often remote due to its subjective nature.
- Whose voices are being heard?
- Reflective of existing power relations in a community

(2 of 3)

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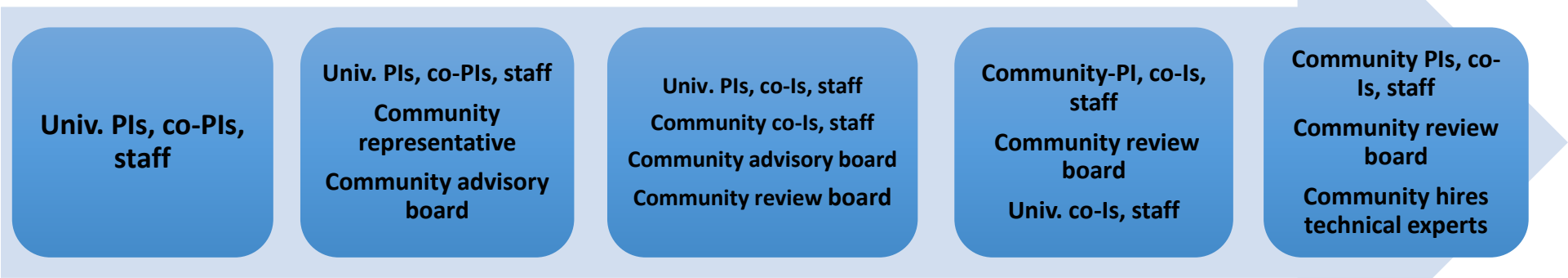
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Advantages

- Small scale surveys are done on a regular basis
- Allows for a timely analysis and intervention
- Cost-effective
- Sustainable
- Applies a variety of methods that can be used flexibly, according to the situation

Disadvantages

- Sample size is too small and not representative
- Never available nationally
- Time consuming



Is this real CBPAR or not?

Where does this fall along the community-engagement continuum?

While attending a conference to learn more about health topic X, an executive director of a local community-based organization (CBO) meets a university professor with expertise relevant to the community's struggles to address health topic X. A week after the conference, the professor visits the community and meets with the executive director, CBO staff, and members of the community to learn more about the problem and discuss what the community sees as strategies to address health problem X. Several months go by until one day the executive director receives a call from the professor who says, "I have wonderful news, our Center just received a \$5 million grant to study the problem we discussed in your community related to health topic X. To get started with the grant we would like you to help us identify a community representative to work with us on the project. For the period of the project we will pay the community representative a full-time salary and benefits. We would also like to get more information about your experiences with health problem X since we last spoke."

Is this real CBPAR or not?

Where does this fall along the community-engagement continuum?

A university research Center supports a community advisory board (CAB), consisting of one Center administrator and the leaders of several local community-based organizations (CBOs). CAB members serve for distinct terms and some have served multiple terms since the establishment of the Center. CAB members are paid as part-time university contractors for the time they commit to CAB activities. CAB members are consulted regularly about research directions of the Center and are asked to review a diverse number of research proposals to internal and external funding agencies. All proposals that the CAB reviews have PIs and Co-Is that are university faculty. Feedback provided by the CAB is used to make modifications to proposals before submission and the CAB is frequently listed as part of a proposal's "Approach" section as an example of how the PI will seek iterative community input and involvement in the research project. Several successful grants have been funded through this process and some have resulted in sub-contracts to the CBOs of CAB members to assist with participant enrollment and data collection. For these sub-contracts, the CBO retains the decision-making power to hire community research assistants and staff to work full time with benefits for the CBO for the period of the grant's sub-contract.

Is this real CBPAR or not?

Where does this fall along the community-engagement continuum?

A university professor has served on the board of directors of a local community based organization (CBO) for one term. Her research interests overlap with the mission and vision of the CBO and at one of the regular board meetings she shares a request for proposals (RFP) for improving health outcomes in the area of their overlapping interests. The RFP does not require inclusion of a named community partner, but she proposes that they all work together and with affected community members to develop research questions, design a study, and submit a proposal. The board and executive director agree to write a letter of support to be included in the proposal. The university professor is listed as the PI and the executive director of the CBO is listed as a named Co-PI on the grant. The budget includes a sub-contract to the CBO with salary support for the executive director, one full-time administrative staff position, two community research assistant staff positions, and 20% overhead. The grant is scored in the highest percentile but the team is notified that they need to cut 20% from the budget to be funded. The team gather to discuss how to respond. They achieve consensus to distribute the 20% cut evenly across the university and CBO-sub-contract budgets and they are subsequently funded to start the research.

Is this real CBPAR or not?

Where does this fall along the community-engagement continuum?

A community based organization (CBO) has a long history of working on health and social disparities problems in the local community. The CBO's executive director and board members all grew up in the affected community. Often the CBO has sought input and assistance from a number of technical experts and professionals at local universities, government agencies, law firms, and social services organizations. Over the years the CBO and its community members have fostered trusting and mutually beneficial relationships with several of these professionals. One day the CBO receives an email through a listserv about a new government agency grants program that requires that funding for a proposed project go directly to the local CBO. The local CBO reaches out to several professionals with whom they have worked over the years and develop research questions, design a study, and submit a proposal. The executive director is the named PI of the grant and members of the board of directors are named as Co-investigators on the grant. Several technical experts and professionals are included on the grant as part-time paid consultants (without benefits) and others are listed as unpaid consultants who agree to implement specific technical aspects of the project. All listed technical experts and professionals write letters of support that are included in the proposal. The grant is funded and the CBO, as the leader of the team, starts the project, seeking input of team members as needed.

Use this template to evaluate what was done.

Research Stage	Was it participatory?	How could it be and why should it be made participatory?
Formulating the research question		
Planning the study		
Collecting data		
Analyzing data		
Developing actions based on data collected		

What is missing from some of these scenarios to determine whether they are examples of good CBPAR?

- What happens after funding is obtained...?
- The “what next” is a big determinant of successful outcomes of CBPAR
- This can be one of the most challenging parts of CBPAR
 - Working together to complete a project
 - Adapting to change – particularly changes in resources/funding
 - Interpreting unexpected findings
 - Dissemination strategies
 - Maintaining momentum for subsequent projects (research and non-research)
- How committed are academic partners to helping community partners sustain their operations after a grant?

Putting It All together