

## Yes, We Can 3 – #EIE2021

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### Power Matters: Achieving equitable engagement in inequitable systems

#### *The Wicked Problem*

A growing number of widely used implementation frameworks, theories, and strategies depend upon effective stakeholder engagement, often conducted across diverse groups with differing needs, resources, and status. Given the importance of collaborating with stakeholders to achieve sustainable implementation, **what can be done to mitigate inequalities inherent to the systems in which change is occurring?** For example, what steps can be taken to ensure meaningful engagement and collaboration from both male supervisors and low-status female workers in a highly gender-stratified setting? What recommendations can be brought to bear in achieving meaningful dialogue and collaboration among groups whose interests may not always be well-aligned?

These are burning questions that we would like to discuss with attendees in this session.

#### *Background*

Our question arises out of an international health project aimed at improving polio vaccine coverage rates in Pakistan, where polio eradication efforts are currently under threat. This project aims to motivate and empower community-based vaccinators (CBV) delivering oral polio vaccine by working with them to develop and refine ideas for program improvement, while also engaging local and regional leadership in adopting and supporting recommended improvements. At the community level, programs and initiatives for vaccination are usually determined by regional or national level planners. CBVs are critical partners in ensuring campaign success, but often feel disempowered and disengaged from their work, which is too frequently dangerous, low-status, and underpaid.

#### *Who is this for (target audience)?*

This problem-solving session is for anyone engaged in improvement or implementation efforts that involve bringing together multiple stakeholders to achieve desired goals in inequitable systems.

