

Pros

- Enhances comprehension of research objectives and procedures.
- Enables dissemination of accurate information from the researchers themselves to community members, community leaders and other stakeholders.
- Helps to create a sense of ownership of the research project by the communities.
- Enhances adherence of participants to study procedures and minimizes loss to follow up
- Strengthens mutual trust and mutual respect between the researchers and the communities.
- Minimizes chances of rumors about the research projects cropping up and spreading to the detriment of the progress of the projects.
- Provides an opportunity for members of communities to learn about research, ethics and protection of their rights while the researchers learnt about the social systems of the particular communities
- Participatory approach helps to motivate community members to play a role in addressing health related issues that affect them
- Could provide locally understandable ways of explaining some technical jargon such as selection bias, experimental and control arms, randomization and blinding.

Cons

- May turn out to be a lengthy step-wise process.
- There is risk of apparent “peer pressure” on potential participants or guardians who may have dissenting views on the research
- Potential misuse of project existence for personal or political ambitions i.e some leaders could use achievements made by the project during election campaigns
- Could raise community’s expectations to levels that are too high to be satisfied by the current research project.