Community health workers form an essential part of the health system in low- and middle-income countries, connecting communities with the health sector. The continuing shortage of human resources for health combined with evidence that community health workers effectively bring health care closer to communities has led to a renewed interest in community health worker programmes. This thesis explores how a complex mix of factors influence community health worker performance, articulating the importance of trust, relationships and expectations between different actors in the health system, with a focus on Sub-Saharan Africa. The insights gained are relevant for policy makers, programme managers and researchers in the field of human resources for health and community health worker programmes. They give directions on how to optimize performance in resource-constrained settings, so that the benefit of community health workers’ unique position between communities and the health sector and their role in achieving universal health coverage can be enhanced.

PERFORMANCE OF COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

Optimizing the benefits of their unique position between communities and the health sector

Maryse Catelijne Kok