

## Chapter 7

# Community Participation

A rodent population in an area can be substantially reduced and then maintained at low level of rodent activities with active participation of the community. The objective of maintaining an area rat-free is achievable. The approaches for establishing and maintaining a rat-free area with the participation of the community can be used for controlling substantially the rodent problem of an area in the long term and the whole territory at large if the approach has been taken by most, if not all, of the people. By adopting the same approaches, the community concerned will have stronger ownership of the rodent control and prevention programme and be keen to see the success of the programme.

Public participation in maintaining the environmental hygiene always at high standards and implementing sound rodent proofing measures can effectively prevent rodents from invading premises. The public can be made known to the importance of controlling and preventing rodent activities in the area and their roles to play by means of publicity material including leaflets and posters, thematic talks or seminars, videos.

## ***Management of Rodent Control Operations***

The rodent control operation for maintaining an area rat-free should be overseen by a responsible body or the management of the area. The composition of the responsible body should be selected by the community of the area representing the members of the community. The responsible body or the management should be responsible for setting the objectives of the rodent control work and outlines of the control programme. Publicities on community participation in rodent prevention have to be one of the important elements in the programme. Pest control company can be appointed for

implementing the programme including carrying out professional and safe rodent control. The scope of control area and the frequency of treatment by pest control company can be compromised and arranged with reference to financial condition and the degree of rodent infestations. The community should be well informed of the rodent control programme before it is implemented and its progress so that members of the community can give their opinions from time to time and would have sense of involvement in the work. Keeping the members well informed the implementation of the rodent control programme would also encourage them to taking the request on them to carrying out anti-rodent measures in their premises in line with the control programme.

A control area and its peripheries may consist of a number of premises managed by different parties or government departments. Therefore, meetings with concerned parties are necessary to be held regularly to coordinate the rodent control operations. Ad hoc meeting can also be held with concerned parties to tackle any difficulties encountered. Concerned parties should be urged to actively participate in rodent control and maintain their premises rodent-free.

The Pest Control Advisory Section and District Hygiene Offices of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department can be approached for technical assistance and advice on the rodent control programme on maintaining a rodent-free area. Pest control companies can also be approached for assistance and advice. For further assistance on rodent prevention and control, please dial our Department hotline 2868 0000.

