499 titles & abstracts identified from searches (see Additional File 1)

25 full text articles obtained for further consideration

7 included studies
- 1 RCT
- 4 CBA
- 1 Case control study
- 1 Before-after study

Of the 492 excluded studies
>300 did not evaluate CHWs

The other excluded studies evaluated the following roles or aspects of CHWs:
- CHW impact on maternal mortality
- CHW impact on trachoma morbidity
- CHW impact on tuberculosis morbidity
- CHW ability to diagnose pneumonia
- CHW knowledge
- Community attitudes towards CHWs
- Adherence to treatments delivered by CHWs
- Hygiene education by CHWs
- Comparisons within a CHW program of differing interventions without the use of a non-CHW control group

RCT: Randomised Controlled Trial
CBA: Controlled Before After Study