

Civil society organizations (CSOs) play an important role in advocacy for resources and policies, elevating voices of affected populations, monitoring and accountability, research and technical assistance, and service delivery. Many CSOs can provide services and community engagement in places the government or other organizations are unable to reach. Advocacy and social mobilization is critical to ensure that national responses are responding to the needs of affected populations, and service delivery takes into account access, equity and quality. CSOs are therefore essential to the partnership model of the Global Financing Facility (GFF).



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Photo: CSO Representatives, GFF Investors Group

HOW THE GFF ENGAGES WITH CSOs

Civil society is represented in the GFF's governance structure in the **GFF Investors Group** by two members. Current representatives are **Africa Health Budget Network** and **Jhpiego**, as well as two alternating members, one of them representing youth. CSO representatives are selected for two years in a process managed by the PMNCH NGO constituency, which includes over 600 members across all geographies. As such the perspective is informed by a broad base of partners. PMNCH also supports a Global CSOs Coordinating Group for GFF of approximately 150 members, which aligns CSO efforts around the GFF. Civil society meetings regularly take place prior to Investors Group meetings.

CSOs also engage with the GFF at the country level, and are an important partner in the development of national Investment Cases, in service delivery, as well as in holding governments accountable for implementation of national plans and budgets.

Civil society engagement on the GFF is guided by a **Civil Society Engagement Strategy** and a **Costed Implementation Plan**. The GFF model also calls for systematic engagement of CSOs in national platforms. The GFF Investors Group in November 2017 agreed to support country-level civil society activities with US\$ 300,000 and PMNCH with an additional US\$ 500,000 over the course of 2018, as an initial contribution to ensure seed funding for the CSO costed plan, with a focus on country and subnational level engagement and capacity building.

HOW CSOs CAN STRENGTHEN THE WORK OF THE GFF

Civil society play an important role in informing key stakeholders about the work of the GFF, and its benefits for affected populations. Progress reports, budget tracking exercises and GFF accountability scorecards produced by CSOs support the GFF in monitoring the implementation of activities, and also hold the GFF accountable to its goals in countries. CSOs therefore play an important role in monitoring both successes and challenges to achieving Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child Health and Nutrition (RMNCAH-N) outcomes. These are critical functions to the GFF's aim to learn and course-correct, in order to contribute to the agreed Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets and to monitor progress on UHC, in an equitable and sustainable manner by 2030.

Civil society also plays an important role in informing and advocating for the GFF and its goals in international fora, and with key partners and investors. CSOs can mobilize support globally, nationally and locally for the GFF to key stakeholders, including policy and decision-makers.

Examples of civil society engagement on reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, adolescent health and nutrition

- **Advocacy: Mobilizing resources and driving policy change**

In Nigeria, the Nigeria CSOs Working Group for GFF in December 2017 launched a first bi-annual GFF Performance Scorecard. The scorecard supports all relevant stakeholders to monitor the performance of the GFF process and Investment Cases. It also provides information, proposes remedial actions and evaluates accountability. In Zambia, Planned Parenthood Association of Zambia and the Centre for Reproductive Health and Education worked with the government to reinstate the budget line for reproductive health supplies, including a significant portion from locally generated revenue.

- **Monitoring and Accountability: Holding leaders accountable to ensure results**

White Ribbon Alliance Uganda collaborated with local midwives, district health officers, and community members to conduct health facility assessments to identify gap in services, supplies, and health workers; and then worked with government officials to respond to the gaps and challenges identified through the assessments, such as training and deploying additional health workers, improving the availability of lifesaving commodities, and addressing facility infrastructure deficiencies.

- **Elevating Voices of Affected Populations: Ensuring that policies and programs reflect local communities' needs and priorities**

In Uganda, the MACIS CSO network supports a local-to-national immunization information chain by working with community health volunteers to collect data and report on immunization gaps, health worker shortages, and supply problems to inform district health officers and national health officers in planning and policymaking.

- **Implementation: Improving health outcomes by introducing and scaling up innovative solutions and reaching the most vulnerable**

In Bihar, India, Project Concern International's Parivartan women's self-help group program, has increased the adoption of key maternal and child health, and sanitation behaviors in marginalized communities, through an innovative approach to health education, women's empowerment, and microfinance support.

- **Research & Data Analysis: Driving effective services and programs**

In Tanzania, the Population Council worked with the Tanzania and Zanzibar AIDS Commissions and UNICEF to analyze data from three key national surveys, and develop a comprehensive report on the situation of adolescents in Tanzania, with recommendations to inform policies, programs, and monitoring and evaluation across sectors.

- **Technical Assistance: Supporting decision-makers to implement policies and programs based on the best available evidence**

In Ghana, PATH worked alongside the Ghana Health Service to capitalize on evidence from local and global research, provide technical assistance to key decision makers, and convene a multi-stakeholder technical working group to develop a national strategy for the prevention of post-partum hemorrhage.¹

CSOs PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN MONITORING BOTH SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES



¹ For further examples, see CSO Engagement Strategy: https://www.globalfinancingfacility.org/sites/gff_new/files/documents/GFF-IG5-5%20CS%20Engagement%20Strategy.pdf