

Adolescent and Youth (AY) Addendum to the Global Financing Facility Civil Society Engagement Strategy

BACKGROUND

The Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health 2016-30 highlights the importance of adolescent health and well-being as being essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) by 2030. For adolescents to survive, thrive and transform their societies, the global community needs to invest in their health and well-being.

Today's adolescents are well-positioned to mobilize their peers, advocate for increased resources for sexual and reproductive health and rights, influence their governments to invest in addressing their needs, and demand accountability for commitments related to their health and development. The Global Financing Facility (GFF) Civil Society Engagement Strategy (CSES) and related implementation plan provide a clear framework for civil society organizations' (CSOs) contribution to the improvement of health outcomes through coalition strengthening, meaningful participation in multi-stakeholder country platforms responsible for coordinating health plans and their implementation,¹ and coordinated action in support of the achievement of national sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health (SRMNCAH) goals.

Youth and adolescent led organizations should use the CSES as the basis for their engagement in the GFF processes both at the global and national levels. This Adolescent and Youth (AY) addendum to the CSES outlines a deliberate approach to ensuring youth representation in the processes led by the GFF Civil Society Coordinating Group² (CSCG) to ensure their meaningful and active participation in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of their country investment case.

Global representation and engagement

The GFF CSCG provides a safe and supportive space for dialogue, exchange, and information sharing about the GFF among civil society, and any youth representative or organization is encouraged to join the CSCG. In addition, there are two youth representatives on Steering Committee for the CSCG to ensure that youth voices are meaningfully represented in GFF civil society processes and decision-making. Special attention will be made to ensure that youth representatives participate in CSCG working groups, including those on accountability, health financing, and capacity building and country engagement. In addition, a sub-group of youth engaged in or interested in the GFF will serve to facilitate greater information-sharing and support

¹ In line with the [Guidance Note: Inclusive Multi-stakeholder Country Platforms in Support of Every Woman Every Child](#)

² Coordinates civil society action around the GFF, is supported by PMNCH. See [Global Civil Society Coordinating Group on the GFF, Terms of Reference](#).

for meaningful youth engagement in GFF countries and at the global level and will provide a consultation platform for the youth representative to the GFF Investors Group (see next paragraph).

Finally, in addition to two designated seats for civil society representatives on the GFF Investors Group (IG), one of the two alternates are currently reserved for a youth representative, with a view towards working with the GFF Secretariat to secure a stand-alone seat or seats for youth representatives by the end of 2019. A youth focal person at the GFF Secretariat should also be identified; and youth should be consulted on all relevant GFF strategies and documents, particularly those related to adolescents and youth and sexual and reproductive health (SRH).

Knowledge-sharing and capacity building

Young people can obtain further information and capacity strengthening support for participating in the GFF process through knowledge-sharing, webinars, periodic mentoring, and a bi-monthly newsletter hosted by the CSCG and partners. Opportunities for the youth IG representative and other young people representing youth organizations should be provided via these platforms to promote information sharing and learning. Special efforts will be made to reach out to young people to ensure their awareness of and engagement in these knowledge-sharing and capacity building platforms. Additional opportunities that may be explored for supporting youth engagement, learning, and exchange across countries include: a youth-focused blog on the GFF; alignment with other youth networks including PMNCH's Adolescent and Youth constituency and those engaged in FP2020, Women Deliver, and the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition; and integration of this addendum and learnings from youth-led advocacy efforts in the GFF into the *Advocating for Change for Adolescents* advocacy toolkit.³

Integrating youth in national CSO action plans & coalitions

The Steering Committee provides guidance and support to CSOs in countries engaging in the GFF and developing national GFF action plans to guide that engagement. Explicit recommendations will be made to include youth networks in coalition activities as well as in-country coalition leadership groups. National CSO coalitions should include representatives of both local or indigenous youth organizations and networks and international organizations; a focus on gender equity and balance should also be considered. A proportion of the grants from the small grants' mechanism supported by PMNCH and the GFF will be attributed to activities that have a deliberate focus on adolescent health and wellbeing, engagement of youth in GFF processes, and support for youth-led organizations. Other grant mechanisms related to the GFF are also strongly encouraged to reserve a proportion of funds for youth issues, youth engagement, and youth-led organizations.

³ PMNCH and Women Deliver, May 2017. [*Advocating for Change for Adolescents: A Practical Toolkit for Young People to Advocate for Improved Adolescent Health and Wellbeing.*](#)

Inclusion of youth in multi-stakeholder country platforms

The *Guidance Note: Inclusive Multi-stakeholder Country Platforms in Support of Every Woman Every Child* emphasizes the minimum standard around inclusiveness, including inclusion of adolescents and youth. Stakeholders implementing the GFF at country level should be cognizant of the need for all key constituencies, including adolescents and youth-led organizations and networks, to be meaningfully involved in the development, implementation, monitoring and review of the country's investment case and health financing strategy. Members of civil society and affected population constituencies, including youth, should be selected for membership of the multi-stakeholder country platform in a transparent manner, by their own self-identified constituency. More than one representative from a constituency should participate in the platform whenever possible.

Accountability

An accountability working group of the CSCG will include youth representative(s) with a view to identify youth-led organizations to develop and implement and/or participate in accountability activities, particularly at the country level. Young people's engagement and collaboration will be central in the monitoring and evaluation of investment cases, as well as their communication with important CSO communities in their country. Expected issues may include explicit inclusion of youth issues in investment cases, concrete opportunities for periodic consultation with youth constituencies on monitoring and evaluation, and access to GFF formal evaluation reports for feedback from youth-led organizations.

Documenting youth engagement around GFF processes to date

Youth engagement, like civil society engagement, varies across GFF countries. To better structure efforts to support youth engagement, it is recommended that youth engagement in planning, implementation, advocacy and accountability across GFF countries be periodically reviewed and documented. This will enable greater learning and better decision making on how to best support and enhance youth engagement moving forward, to ensure that the maximum contributions of young people can be leveraged to support the goals of countries, the GFF, and the Global Strategy.