**Recommendations for Effective CSO Engagement in RMNCAH Country Platforms:**

**Participation, Transparency, and Accountability**

CSOs have identified important steps that governments can take to ensure meaningful CSO participation in Country Platforms.[[1]](#footnote-1)

***Inclusiveness and participation***

* CSO members of Country Platforms should be selected in a participatory and transparent manner. Given the diversity of civil society, country platforms should include at least two seats for CSOs, representing broad coalitions.
* Country Platform representatives should have a Terms of reference (TORs) that includes systematic consultation with groups within and outside their constituency for broader input. The platform should include financing for constituency engagement as required.
* Country Platforms should develop a Stakeholder Engagement Plan for transparently engaging with a broader range of stakeholders that are not part of the country platform.
* CSO members of the country platform should fully and actively involved at all stages in the GFF process.

***Transparency***

* Country platform operational procedures, member selection, a detailed list of current members, meeting times and when documents will be sent ahead of meetings; voting rules; and a stakeholder engagement plan should be made publicly available on Ministry of Health and GFF websites and should be disseminated to a listserve with voluntary registration within a reasonable timeframe:.
* Updates on all meetings and opportunities for input, including minutes and attendees of meetings to develop investment cases and health financing strategies; and timelines for action items coming out of meetings; versions of investment cases and other documents should be made available for input.
* Other documents that should be made public include Investment Cases and Health Financing Strategies (with results framework and costed implementation plan); financing agreements, progress reports, evaluation reports.
* All consultation meetings for Country Platforms should be posted at least 2 weeks in advance including all documents, with a list of participants with emails so that representatives can be reached ahead of time. Where possible meetings are available live through webcast.

***Independence and Accountability***

1. Country Platforms should align their accountability and monitoring processes with other national processes in order to strengthen national capacity for monitoring and reporting. In those countries that choose to do so annual health sector reviews should be used as a forum to jointly review Government- and independently-provided reports on GFF results, and should include all constituencies outlined under Inclusiveness and Participation above, otherwise other mechanisms to review reports on GFF results need to be put in place
2. An independent review of the adherence to the country platforms’ own operational procedures should be conducted and made public at least every two years.
3. The country platform should propose and implement a grievance mechanism to receive and facilitate resolution of concerns and grievances from project affected parties related to the minimum standards. Should the country platform not respond to grievances in a timely manner, these should be directed to an ombudsman, according to a grievance mechanism and redress policy endorsed by the GFF Investors Group.
4. The country platform will create an accountability working group to develop an accountability strategy for the implementation of the investment plan. This strategy will take into account centralized and decentralized levels. It will prioritize national and local community-based accountability through the use of scorecards and citizens’ hearings and will also include budget analysis and advocacy. The implementation of this strategy will be funded independently from the GFF.

1. This is a condensed version of the recommendations put forward to the Investors Group to strengthen the Minimum Standards for Country Platforms in February, 2016. It reflect perspectives from 45 representatives from 13 countries, including ten of the twelve GFF countries. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)