



Global Civil Society
Coordinating
Group for the GFF



The Partnership
for Maternal, Newborn
& Child Health

CASE STUDY: Senegal

The experience of civil society engagement in the Global Financing Facility

Background and introduction

Launched at the Financing for Development Conference in Addis Ababa in July 2015, The Global Financing Facility (GFF) in support of Every Woman Every Child is an innovative financing model that supports country-led efforts to improve the health and nutrition of women, children, and adolescents. The multi-stakeholder approach of the GFF combines domestic and external financing, including from the private sector. Of the 67 countries eligible to receive financing from the GFF Trust Fund, twenty-six countries have joined the GFF to date. The GFF is seeking to raise an additional \$2 billion this year to expand to the rest of the countries within the next five years.

The GFF partnership model recognizes the critical roles civil society organizations (CSOs) can play in support of the GFF, such as: advocacy, monitoring and accountability, elevating the voices of affected populations, implementation and service delivery, research and data analysis, and technical assistance. This is reflected in the GFF Business Plan and the **GFF Civil Society Engagement Strategy**.¹ The **Guidance Note: Inclusive Multi-stakeholder Country Platforms in Support of Every Woman Every Child**² ensures that multi-stakeholder country platforms include civil society and have the minimum standards of inclusion, transparency, and accountability. However, while there is strong civil society engagement in some GFF countries, there are significant improvements to be made in others.

The **GFF Civil Society Coordinating Group**³ commissioned this case study to describe the experience of CSOs' participation and engagement in the GFF process in Senegal. It illustrates the strengths, internal and external challenges, and factors affecting CSOs' ability to meaningfully contribute to the GFF process, and provides lessons learned and recommendations that civil society in other GFF countries can draw on to strengthen their engagement going forward. The case study is informed by several CSO consultations, country discussions, country experiences^{4,5} and a 2017 survey summarized in the Civil Society Implementation Plan.⁶

¹ Civil Society Engagement Strategy (2017). Retrieved from: https://www.globalfinancingfacility.org/sites/gff_new/files/documents/GFF-IG5-5%20CS%20Engagement%20Strategy.pdf

² PMNCH, H6, Every Woman Every Child, GFF. (2017). Guidance Note: Inclusive Multi-stakeholder Country Platforms in Support of Every Woman Every Child. Retrieved from: https://www.globalfinancingfacility.org/sites/gff_new/files/documents/GFF%20Country%20Platform%20guidance%20note.pdf

³ The CSCG is hosted by PMNCH and brings together global and regional representatives to improve communication and support the two CS representatives on the GFF Investors' Group

⁴ Hurd S, Wilson R and Cody A. Civil Society Engagement in the Global Financing Facility: Analysis and Recommendations. Global Health Visions and Catalysts for Change. (February 2016). Retrieved from: http://globalhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/CivilSocietyEngagementintheGFF_final.pdf, And Hurd S, and Dia M. Addendum to Civil Society Engagement in the GFF, Report. Global Health Visions. (January 2017). Retrieved from: http://globalhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/CS-Engagement-in-the-GFF_Addendum_Final.pdf

⁵ Governance workshop report

⁶ Civil society implementation plan (2017) Retrieved from: https://www.globalfinancingfacility.org/sites/gff_new/files/documents/GFF-IG6-10.pdf

Country context

CSOs in Senegal enjoy a relatively favorable enabling environment. They are key actors in education, health service provision, as well as other sectors, filling the gaps in essential services and remote areas not covered by the Government.

There are several CSO health alliances and coalitions in Senegal.⁷ These coalitions constitute a vibrant ecosystem of individuals and organizations bringing their unique expertise and knowledge in SRMNCAH+N. Their mandates span across service delivery, awareness raising, research, advocacy, education, protection, human rights and gender. Some of these alliances are the National Alliance against AIDS, the Youth Alliance for Reproductive Health, the Population and Development Network, the Siggil Jiggeen Network (RSJ), RESSIP (Health, HIV/AIDS, population), and the National Alliance of Religious Leaders and Medical Experts.

The CSOs regularly interact in different multi-stakeholder health platforms and through various global health initiatives, such as the Multi-Sectoral Maternal and Child Health Alliance, and the Global Fund Country Coordinating Mechanism. They are positioned as valued stakeholders and partners for the Government, and they share the GFF goal of *“accelerating global and national efforts to end preventable maternal and child deaths and improve the health and quality of life of women, children, and adolescents by 2030.”*

Engagement of Senegalese civil society in the GFF process

Senegal is part of the GFF second-wave countries, including Bangladesh, Cameroon, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria and Uganda.⁸ The front runner countries were DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania. CSOs in Senegal had a very early exposure to the GFF, through a Government nominated civil society representative to the GFF country platform.

In February 2016, the former Regional PMNCH⁹ focal point¹⁰, based in Dakar organized a CSO consultation, held in the presence of the Ministry of Health and the World Bank. It gathered 33 participants from 21 organizations, including sub-regional organizations, two days ahead of the first national GFF information meeting hosted by the World Bank and the Ministry of Health. The objectives of the meeting were to: 1) share outcomes from the first GFF CSO meeting in Nairobi meeting, 2) introduce the GFF, 3) present the Minimum Standards of participation, inclusion, transparency and accountability;¹¹ and 4) find ways to coordinate CSOs' participation in the country platform. The main outcomes of the meeting were for CSOs to coordinate into one national GFF Coalition and prepare a CSO engagement strategy for the GFF.

Since then, many other CSOs working in SRMNCAH+N have leveraged their own funds and gotten support from partners to organize several consultative meetings, over the two years since the country joined the GFF. The objectives of these meetings were to provide CSOs with national and global

⁷AFEMS, ANREMS, Alliance nationale contre le SIDA, Alliance nationale des jeunes pour la santé de la reproduction, Alliance nationale de plaidoyer sur la santé de la mère et de l'enfant, RESSIP, RFESPF, Réseau Siggil Jiggeen

⁸ Second wave countries were announced at the GFF launch in Addis Ababa in July 2015

⁹ Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health

¹⁰ The former Dakar-based PMNCH focal point played a crucial role in facilitating coordination, communication and networking between CSOs, to streamline efforts done by different organizations.

¹¹ The Minimum Standards can be found in Annex 2 of: PMNCH, H6, Every Woman Every Child, GFF. (2017). Guidance Note: Inclusive Multi-stakeholder Country Platforms in Support of Every Woman Every Child. Retrieved from:

https://www.globalfinancingfacility.org/sites/gff_new/files/documents/GFF%20Country%20Platform%20guidance%20note.pdf

information and updates about the GFF, but also to discuss ways to structure CSO engagement in the GFF process.

Some key events organized by CSOs and their partners¹² include:

- Several information sharing sessions on the GFF between 2016 and 2017, conducted by RSJ
- A workshop to formulate the Senegalese civil society engagement strategy in March 2017
- A three-day strategic planning consultation in October 2017, led by CICODEV
- A governance workshop in January 2018, led by Enda Santé.

In addition to these consultations, CSO representatives selected by their own constituency or the Senegalese Government participate once a year in the civil society GFF workshop organized by the Global Civil Society Coordinating Group for the GFF, prior to the fall GFF Investors Group meeting. This workshop not only provides participants a platform for learning and exchange with CSOs representatives from other countries, but it also gives them the opportunity to share knowledge gained with their constituencies once they return to their countries.

CSO key achievements and contribution to the investment case

The constructive relationship of the GFF CSO Coalition with the government's key ministries (e.g. Ministry of Health, Ministry of Youth, Ministry of Budget and Planning), members of parliament, the World Bank and technical partners, has contributed to civil society's meaningful engagement in the GFF process. The Ministry of Health has participated in all national workshops organized by civil society and involves CSOs in all technical meetings of the country platform. Below are some key achievements of the coalition:

- Better understanding of the GFF and enhanced knowledge and capacity of CSOs to engage in decision-making processes at national level
- Increased CSO knowledge of the country investment case priorities
- Increased space for a more structured dialogue and advocacy for CSOs, through the creation of a GFF CSO Steering Committee working on the GFF
- Better involvement of youth and vulnerable populations
- Improved coordination, collaboration and communication among CSOs, thus fostering learning and exchange
- CSOs recognize their value-add, role and contributions to the objectives of the investment case.

Civil society organizations in Senegal have gone further than improving their coordination and communication around the GFF. They mobilized their own resources and reallocated existing grants to support their engagement efforts. They also actively took part in technical meetings of the GFF country platform led by the government, providing inputs and influencing key priorities of the investment case and health financing strategy, such as youth and adolescent health.

At the last CSO strategic planning workshop in October 2017, CSOs analyzed the country investment case, with the help of the Ministry of Health. They selected key

CSO action plan strategic objectives

- Increase supply, availability and accessibility of high-impact RMNCAH+N quality services, particularly at the community level
- Increase demand and utilization of RMNCAH+N services in priority regions
- Improve the enabling environment for effective implementation of programs
- Ensure M&E, Citizen Watch and CS Coordination Mechanism

¹² Partners that supported CSOs in their involvement efforts into the GFF include: PMNCH, through their Regional Focal point, OSIWA through a grant to CICODEV, Mamaye/Evidence for Action, Advance Family Planning to RSJ, ENDA Santé

priority regions and interventions they could focus on, to complement the government's actions and meaningfully contribute to the investment case in a more structured way, through the development of their action plan. The action plan highlights their role in advocacy, sensitizing the population in generating demand and utilizing RMNCAH+N services, monitoring, accountability, and resource mobilization, and has been endorsed by the country platform and integrated in the country investment case.

The collaborative efforts put in the development of the action plan have played a significant role in shaping the coalition governance structure, which has now been institutionalized. Today, the national GFF CSO platform is well established, with a clear governance structure, and thematic groups covering communication and advocacy, demand and service generation, monitoring and citizen watch, resource mobilization, and youth sexual reproductive health. Two elected CSO representatives sit on the GFF country platform and represent their constituencies in global meetings. Information is shared through email and regular meetings held by the Steering Committee.

During the investment case validation meeting in June 2018, the Senegalese government praised civil society engagement and highlighted their collaboration and contributions to the development of the investment case. The World Bank stated that the experience of the Senegalese civil society in the GFF is a best practice to be shared, due to CSOs' commitment, engagement and own strategy to mobilize and leverage their own resources and identify key interventions to contribute to the investment case.

Challenges for meaningful CSO engagement

While civil society participation and engagement have greatly improved, several challenges have been identified through the engagement process, which have helped shape the development of the action plan and governance structure.

Communication, coordination, and collaboration

Poor coordination and communication have been cited as key barriers in effective CSO engagement in the GFF process in Senegal. Several CSOs raised the issue of not being consulted by the CSO representative to the GFF country platform, and that their engagement and participation was limited due to their low level of information about the GFF. While some CSOs showed strong knowledge about GFF processes, access to GFF information was uneven across the country, as those involved did not systematically connect with the broader CSO constituency. For many, information on the country investment case and the clear role of CSOs was only made possible through donor supported national consultations, and not by their peers.

Some of the challenges met by CSOs

Communication, coordination and collaboration

- Lack of a clear governance structure
- Limited funding

Clear governance structure

Lack of clarity around civil society governance process, transparency and accountability were also some of the challenges faced by civil society organizations trying to engage in the GFF process, who were also questioning the issue of proper representation of their constituency. The lack of a national CSO GFF

coordination platform two years ago made it difficult to share information and coordinate a structured dialogue around the GFF. Until recently, there was no institutional mechanism for citizen participation and decision-making, strong leadership and a clear strategic vision. A remaining challenge is to monitor and manage the activities of the various thematic groups set up to be able to make a relevant decision on the strategic orientation of the coalition.

Limited funds for CSO consultations

Though CSOs have used their own resources and donors have supported meetings and national consultations, funding remains a significant issue of concern for the Coalition to convene meetings, run activities, develop monitoring and accountability tools, etc. Distance and transportation costs are still major barriers for a significant number of organizations located in remote areas, thus limiting their participation in key meetings happening in Dakar.

Lessons learned from the CSO Coalition

Drawing upon the experience of the civil society participation and engagement in the GFF process in Senegal, below are some lessons learned useful for CSOs in other countries seeking to strengthen their engagement in the GFF process.

- **Develop a joint work plan:** it is crucial for CSO coalitions to establish a common roadmap, an action plan with shared objectives and activities. Members should be assigned roles, responsibilities and timelines. In addition to adding credibility and leveraging their broad expertise, this will help strengthen member engagement and mobilize funding for the Coalition.
- **Enhance communication, information sharing and coordination:** though they require financial resources to organize, inclusive national consultations have proven to be very effective for sharing information and getting feedback from CSOs. Early, transparent and inclusive engagement of civil society is crucial in the GFF process, to ensure CSOs are involved in and can influence the development of the investment case and the health financing strategy. It is critical to keep regular and transparent information flow, through different communication channels, in accessible formats and multiple languages, where necessary. Key documents need to be accessible in a timely manner to allow for preparation in advance of meetings and consultations, and for meaningful dialogue. Partnering with the media has also been a good way in Senegal to share the priorities of the GFF and disseminate information through television and newspapers.
- **Focus on governance:** the establishment of good governance structure for a coalition, with decision-making processes, a steering committee, and executive secretariat, clear monitoring, reporting and accountability principles, and roles and responsibilities for members increase member engagement and are very important for the effective functioning of a coalition.
- **Ensure civil society-selected representation:** CSO representatives should be selected by their own constituencies through a formal, transparent, and participatory process, with appropriate consideration to gender, youth, vulnerable populations and geographic disparity. Young people must be fully considered and consulted in a more proactive way so that they can share their perspectives and take part in the discussions, planning and monitoring of the GFF investment case. Some of the youth coalitions may need to be strengthened to take part in the technical discussions. It is essential to involve cross-sectoral and thematic CSOs in the GFF dialogue, which to-date has been over-represented by the well-funded family planning community in Senegal.
- **Provide funding opportunities for CSOs:** networking, coordination and CSO alignment around the GFF are lengthy processes. Opportunities for engagement are often hampered by the lack of resources to organize meetings, pay for transportation and logistics. CSOs need technical

and financial support to continuously support their engagement, and to ensure their action plan is implemented and monitored.

- **Strengthen CSO capacity:** the Senegalese experience showed that several consultations with CSOs are key to making CSOs familiar with the GFF and to ensuring they understand how they can contribute to it. There is a need to increase resources to support CSO capacity development for their effective engagement in the GFF, in policy and budget advocacy, data collection and research, monitoring and evaluation, good governance and resource mobilization.

Conclusion

This case study suggests that an enabling environment is an essential factor for CSOs to participate in the planning and design of the GFF Investment Case and the Health Financing Strategy. There is a great potential contribution of Senegalese CSOs to the objectives of the GFF, given their diversity, expertise and geographic distribution. The Senegalese government acknowledges that CSO contributions will be critical in achieving the objectives of the investment case, including in monitoring and accountability. The Coalition members committed to overcome the identified challenges and consolidate their roles to effectively contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of women, children and adolescents of Senegal. Meaningful CSO engagement and participation will happen when all GFF stakeholders, including CSOs, apply the Minimum Standards for inclusion, participation, transparency and accountability, provided CSOs are equipped with the right resources and tools to operate.

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