**Concept Note:**

**CSO GFF Platform-building and Strategy-development Meeting**

**Lilongwe, Malawi**

July 23-25th, 2018

1. **Background**

The [Global Financing Facility](https://www.globalfinancingfacility.org/) in support of [Every Woman, Every Child](http://www.everywomaneverychild.org/) (GFF) is a health financing partnership that brings together stakeholders in sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, adolescent health and nutrition (SRMNCAH+N) under national government leadership in a [Multi-stakeholder Country Platform](https://www.globalfinancingfacility.org/sites/gff_new/files/documents/GFF%20Country%20Platform%20guidance%20note.pdf). The GFF is intended to be innovative, aiming to increase country investment in support of Every Woman Every Child.

Malawi joined the GFF in November 2017 to improve health and nutrition of Malawian people, especially women, children and adolescents. The Government of Malawi through the Ministry of Health Department of Planning is currently leading the GFF process. The Directorate of Reproductive Health (DRH) has also been involved. The official GFF launch in Malawi is anticipated in the next few months, but the exact date is unknown. Following the official launch, the Ministry of Health will convene a [Multi-stakeholder Country Platform](https://www.globalfinancingfacility.org/sites/gff_new/files/documents/GFF%20Country%20Platform%20guidance%20note.pdf) that brings together a range of stakeholders in sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, adolescent health and nutrition (SRMNCAH+N). This Country Platform will develop an [Investment Case](https://www.globalfinancingfacility.org/sites/gff_new/files/documents/Investment%20Case%20guidance%20note.pdf)**[[1]](#footnote-2)**--or identify an existing Health Sector Strategy--that defines the priorities that will be funded by the GFF trust fund, World Bank credits, and aligned donor and government funds.

The potential benefits for civil society in engaging in the GFF are in influencing government priorities and government and partner investments in SRHMCAH+N, and engaging commitment-makers to ensure that they follow-through on their stated intentions. In other words, the GFF is an advocacy and accountability opportunity.

Civil society engagement on GFF contributes important experience reaching the underserved and hard to reach populations that should inform GFF priorities, knowledge gained from implementing health projects in remote areas, providing technical assistance, influencing policy directions, monitoring, and accountability for results, resources and rights.[[2]](#footnote-3) In Malawi, civil society’s potential contributions to GFF is particularly important given the important technical and service delivery roles that the not for profit program implementers play in supplementing public health services. Accountability-focused organizations bring important pressure on the Government of Malawi to deliver on commitments expressed in strategies and policies, including the forthcoming GFF Investment Case and Health Financing Strategy.

In GFF countries, civil society typically coordinates interventions in the GFF Multi-Stakeholder Country Platform through uniting in **CSO GFF Platform**. Through forming a single civil society platform, Malawian civil society can be stronger together. Civil society can collectively define priorities so policy and program “asks” by different members of the platform are mutually-reinforcing, emphasize shared concerns, share information, and streamline engagement with government and donors. A CSO GFF Platform that understands its members strengths can leverage internal technical knowledge to supplement government and partner expertise and ensure quality program and policy design. This level of contribution to the GFF will not be possible unless the diverse range of civil society actors in Malawi comes together.

The Ministry of Health and the World Bank focal points for Malawi have been receptive to civil society inputs in the GFF process in Malawi and have begun engaging civil society. While encouraging, this engagement has been ad-hoc to date and the next steps are not clear. Civil society mechanisms for coordination and information-sharing with a broad set of actors in the field are emerging but fragmented. The emerging stewards of civil society GFF engagement in Malawi have identified the need to develop an inclusive civil society platform on GFF, map the GFF process, identify advocacy priorities, and develop a corresponding strategy.

1. **Meeting Goals**

The overarching goal of this meeting is to convene all civil society actors in Malawi who would contribute to GFF goals together to define a working approach to strengthen coordination and inclusivity for maximum effectiveness. We will pilot an approach to jump-start action in Malawi through South-South learning that incorporates the wisdom of civil society in GFF countries with very strong civil society GFF coalitions, namely: Kenya and Uganda. The meeting will be convened by PAI on behalf of and in coordination with the steering committee of the global Civil Society Coordinating Group on the GFF.

Meeting objectives are:

* Civil society working on GFF in Malawi begins to unite into a single CSO GFF Platform;
* The CSO GFF platform maps the GFF processes and opportunities for engagement; and
* The CSO GFF platform begins to develop an advocacy action Plan for civil society engagement.

1. **Logistics:**

Travel reimbursement will be provided for participants outside Lilongwe. Participants will be reimbursed for coach transportation upon receipt; and for accommodation, meals and incidentals at the standard government rate of MWK 25,000 per day.

1. **Participants**:

The meeting will include around 50 representatives from civil society organizations working on sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, adolescent health and nutrition, as well as health systems strengthening, budget advocacy and other relevant issue areas. Participants may also include policy makers and selected Members of Parliament from the Parliamentary Committee on Health, who play a vital role in mobilizing government resources for health. The size limit is not strict, but rather to encourage meaningful dialogue.

1. For an overview of the anticipated process, structures and outputs, see the GFF’s Guidance Notes on [Inclusive Multi-stakeholder Country Platforms](https://www.globalfinancingfacility.org/sites/gff_new/files/documents/GFF%20Country%20Platform%20guidance%20note.pdf) and [Investment Cases](https://www.globalfinancingfacility.org/sites/gff_new/files/documents/Investment%20Case%20guidance%20note.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Global Financing Facility. November 2017. Civil Society Engagement Strategy. Retrieved from: <https://www.globalfinancingfacility.org/sites/gff_new/files/documents/GFF-IG5-5%20CS%20Engagement%20Strategy.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)