Global Financing Facility: Civil Society Meeting

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

1 November 2016

**CONCEPT NOTE**

**Background**

Last November, civil society organizations (CSOs) gathered in Nairobi, in advance of the Global Financing Facility (GFF) multi-stakeholder learning meeting, to share experiences and lessons learned in engaging with the GFF, particularly at country level. The CSO meeting contributed to documented lessons and recommendations for enhancing civil society engagement in the GFF,[[1]](#footnote-1) including finalizing and agreeing upon a comprehensive set of *Minimum Standards for RMNCAH Country Platforms.[[2]](#footnote-2)* It also provided a platform for aligning around common priorities and messages for the civil society representatives on the GFF Investors’ Group, and for country CSO representatives participating in the GFF multi-stakeholder learning meeting and in country level consultations and platforms related to the GFF.

Since last year’s meeting, several improvements have been made towards enhancing CSO engagement in the GFF, but key challenges remain. A global level Civil Society Coordinating Group was formed, bringing together interested global and regional partners and coalition representatives to improve communication and provide a consultative group to support the two CSO representatives on the Investors’ Group.[[3]](#footnote-3) A series of webinars for global, regional, and country level CSOs (in English and French) have also helped to further enhance communication and sharing of lessons.[[4]](#footnote-4) In some countries, there have been CSO consultations to support alignment of CSO priorities and contributions to GFF processes, while in other countries CSO engagement and consultation has remained quite minimal and unsystematic.

Civil society has an important role to play in the GFF, bringing knowledge, expertise, and access to a range of communities, which can and should be leveraged to make the GFF process and outcomes stronger. To support meaningful engagement of civil society in GFF processes there is a need to provide additional opportunities for cross-learning, information-sharing, and alignment of CSOs engaging in the GFF.

**Meeting Objectives**

This civil society meeting will provide a forum for discussion and exchange among civil society organizations from GFF countries and will generate strategic recommendations for achieving optimal CSO engagement in country platforms, and leveraging the value of CSO contributions to implementation, advocacy and resource mobilization, and accountability for the GFF.

Specifically, the CSO meeting will:

* Share and document lessons from the implementation of GFF at the country level as it relates to CSO engagement, by sharing experiences from GFF countries on CSO engagement in the development and implementation of RMNCAH investment cases and health financing strategies to date, and identifying what has worked well or could be better and why.
* Review and discuss a draft Civil Society Engagement Strategy for the GFF, to outline specific steps, roles and responsibilities, and costing for enhancing civil society’s role in GFF processes at global, regional, and national levels.
* Discuss and agree upon systems and approaches for further enhancing communication and information-sharing from the global to the regional and national levels, and vice versa – such as the identification of country CSO focal points to participate in and liaise between the global civil society coordinating group and national CSO coalition(s).

**Timing**

This GFF civil society meeting is being planned in Dar es Salaam on November 1, 2016, in order to capitalize upon and link with two other critical meetings occurring in the same location shortly afterwards – the FP2020 Reference Group meeting on October 31-November 1, and related site visits and a civil society panel October 31 through November 2, a joint cocktail reception and CSO panel on November 2, and the GFF Investors’ Group meeting on November 3-4. This is a unique opportunity to leverage connections and linkages between related global efforts. The cocktail reception and CSO panel on November 2will bring together some of the participants from all three meetings to share key priorities and lessons across a range of stakeholder groups. In addition, having an in-person civil society meeting – which brings together representatives from GFF countries – right before the Investors’ Group meeting, will provide an opportunity for civil society representatives that are experiencing GFF processes first-hand in-country, to share their concerns, priorities, and lessons with the two civil society representatives to the Investors’ Group, so those issues can be brought for discussion at the Investors’ Group meeting.

**Participants**

Participants will include national representatives from each of the first- and second-wave GFF countries (Bangladesh, Cameroon, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, and Uganda), as well as relevant regional and global representatives. Two participants from each country will be sponsored to participate. Country CSO participants should represent relevant RMNCAH coalitions in their countries and/or should be participating on the GFF multi-stakeholder country platform; they should commit to acting as a liaison with the larger network of RMNCAH CSOs interested in engaging in the GFF in their respective countries, and facilitate information flow and communication.

Regional and global participants will be required to self-fund their participation. Invitations will be based on participation in last year’s CSO meeting in Nairobi to enhance continuity. Additional participants who would like to attend will be limited to one per organization, except in cases where an organization is contributing to sponsoring the meeting.

Representatives from the GFF Secretariat will also be invited to attend the meeting, in order to hear and be part of the rich discussion among civil society representatives about their experiences to-date in engaging with the GFF, and how to strengthen their engagement moving forward. This will provide an opportunity for further enhancing communication and putting priorities into action.

An estimated 50-60 participants are expected to attend.

1. Global Health Visions and Catalysts for Change*.* [*Civil Society Engagement in the Global Financing Facility: Analysis and Recommendations*](http://globalhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/CivilSocietyEngagementintheGFF_final.pdf). February 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [Recommended Minimum Standards for RMNCAH Country Platforms](http://www.portal.pmnch.org/pmnch/media/events/2015/cso_min_standards.pdf), November 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [Civil Society Coordinating Group on the GFF: Terms of Reference – DRAFT](http://www.who.int/pmnch/gff_cso_tor.pdf). January 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Global Health Council. [GFF Updates](http://globalhealth.org/global-financing-facility/). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)