

A young girl with her hair in a bun, wearing an orange dress with a white lace overlay, stands next to a bright blue door. The background is a textured wall with some blue paint splatters.

Global Financing Facility

Civil Society and Youth-Led Organization Landscape Assessment

April 2023

SUMMARY REPORT

A. Introduction

PAI conducted a Baseline Landscape Assessment in February and March 2023¹ to better understand the landscape of civil society organizations (CSOs) and youth-led organizations (YLOs) in GFF partner countries. The Baseline Landscape Assessment consisted of two forms of data collection: a survey, and a set of interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders.

First, a survey was shared through multiple listservs and social media channels to reach CSO/YLO representatives in 36 GFF partner countries that work in sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and nutrition (SRMNCAH-N).² The survey was also disseminated through the GFF Civil Society Coordinating Group (CSCG) listserv and related WhatsApp groups to reach as many CSO/YLO stakeholders as possible. The survey was publicly available in both English and French for approximately three weeks from February to March 2023 and respondents from 33 GFF focus countries submitted a total of 150 responses. The survey served to document respondents' perspectives about enablers of and barriers to meaningful civil society and youth engagement in country-level policy processes and global health financing fora, including those related to the GFF. The survey also elicited feedback on the strengths, gaps and challenges faced by CSOs/YLOs in their work, in addition to their knowledge of and engagement with GFF processes.

The Baseline Landscape Assessment included key informant interviews and focus group discussions with GFF stakeholders that operate at the global, regional, and country levels. A total of six key informant interviews and two focus group discussions involving a total of 14 CSCG members were conducted in March 2023 to document opportunities for, benefits of and challenges to meaningful civil society and youth engagement in GFF processes.

Key informant interview participants included representatives from:

- WACI Health
- Impact Santé Afrique
- The Ouagadougou Partnership
- UNICEF
- Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH)
- Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Network (SUN CSN)

Two focus groups were held with a total of 14 representatives from CSCG members representing organizations that work in the Global South and Global North and who have experience engaging in GFF processes. Eight people that work in the Global South participated in one focus group, while six people that work in the Global North participated in the other.

An overview of the findings from this assessment are presented below. These findings will be used by members of the CSCG and PAI as the GFF NGO Host to develop plans to target existing capacity gaps and strengthen multi-sectoral collaboration. The ultimate goal is to increase meaningful CSO/YLO engagement GFF processes at the country level. The survey is also intended to identify priorities and opportunities to support CSO/YLO networks to ensure they are positioned, resourced, and equipped to act as advocates to advance SRMNCAH-N in the countries where they work and can serve as stakeholders considered vital to GFF processes.

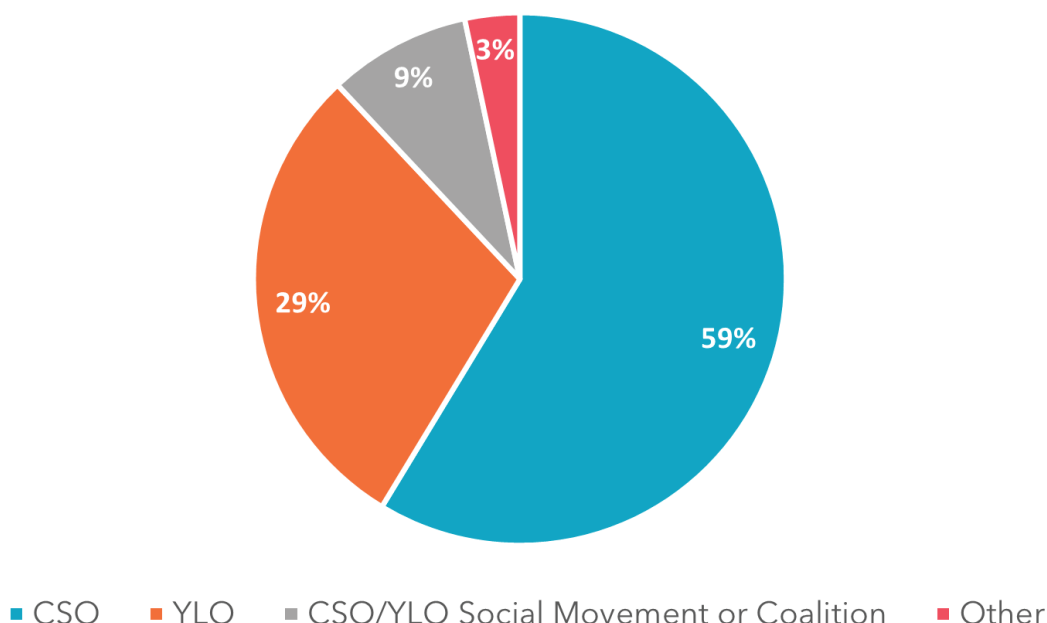
B. Overview of Survey Respondents

Most respondents to the survey (81%) identified themselves as CSOs/YLOs. As shown in Figure 1, 59% of respondents identified themselves as CSOs, 29% as YLOs with leadership under 30 years of age, 9% as CSO/YLO social movements or coalitions, and the remaining 3% as international NGOs with country offices, research institutions or similar organizations.

Funding Affiliation

Approximately 67% of survey respondents reported that their organization either does not currently receive or has never received funding from any of PAI's grant mechanisms. Another 27% of respondents reported that they have previously or are currently receiving funding from PAI, while 6% were unsure. Of those who have received funding from PAI, 14 respondents currently receive funding as GFF-funded partners and 13 respondents received funding as past GFF-funded partners whose awards had ended at the time of the survey.

Figure 1. Survey respondents by organizational affiliation, 2023 CSO/YLO Community Survey



Geographic Representation

Recognizing that many organizations operate at multiple geographic levels, respondents were asked to select all levels in which they work, such as subnational, national, regional, or global. Most respondents (81%) work at the national level, while 45% of respondents work sub-nationally, 24% regionally and 8% globally. Except for Guatemala, Haiti, and Tajikistan, at least one respondent reported working in each of the 36 GFF partner countries (see Appendix I). The survey responses represent 91.6% of GFF partner countries, with an average of 6 responses per country.

Sector Experiences

Approximately 90% of survey respondents reported working in health and nutrition, including SRMNCAH-N. Respondents also worked in gender equality (60%), education (45%), human rights (44%) and climate change (38%), as shown in Figure 2. Respondents that selected 'Other' reported working in refugee settlements, economic empowerment, digital safety, public health emergencies, or peacebuilding and conflict management.

Of those that work in health and nutrition, they reported focusing on the following areas: sexual and reproductive health (SRH) (85%) and adolescent health (77%). Some 60% of respondents also reported working in maternal health, as well as nutrition. Respondents that selected 'Other' work in the following health and nutrition focus areas: HIV/AIDS; tuberculosis; menstrual health; breast cancer; neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) like malaria; universal health coverage (UHC); gender-based violence (GBV); water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH); immunization; primary healthcare and non-communicable diseases (NCDs). See Figure 3 for more details.

As shown in Figure 4, survey respondents also reported conducting the following activities: advocacy (95%), civic and youth engagement (59% and 73%, respectively) as well as accountability and monitoring (59%). Respondents that selected 'Other' also work in community health education and social mobilization.

Figure 2. Work of survey respondent by sector, 2023 CSO/YLO Community Survey

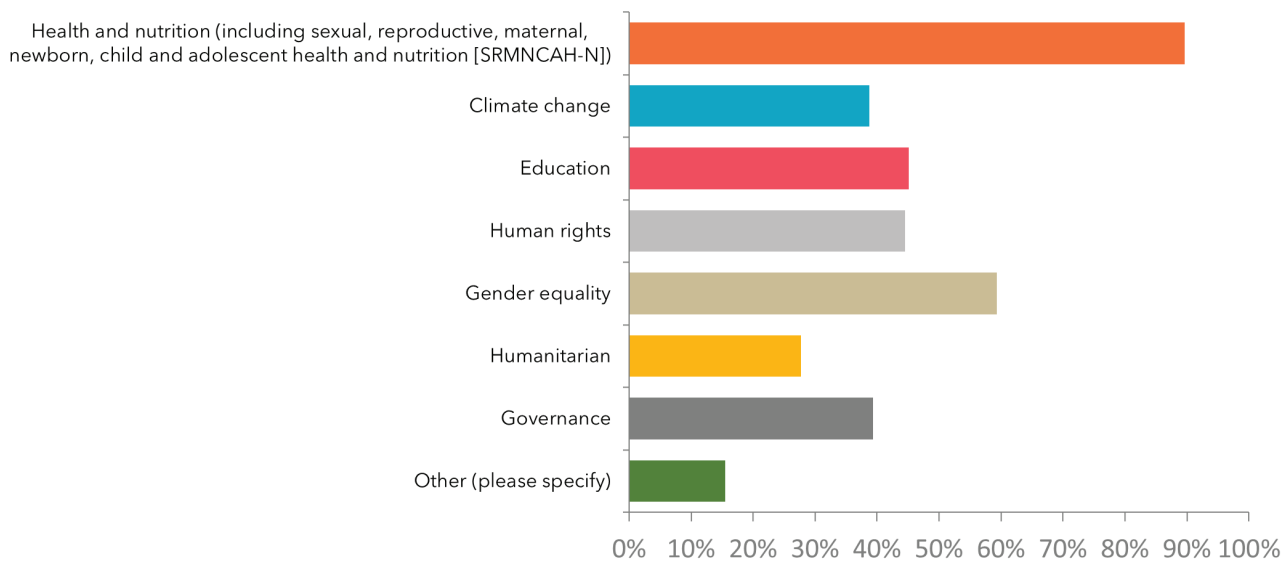


Figure 3. Health and nutrition focus areas of respondents, 2023 CSO/YLO Community Survey

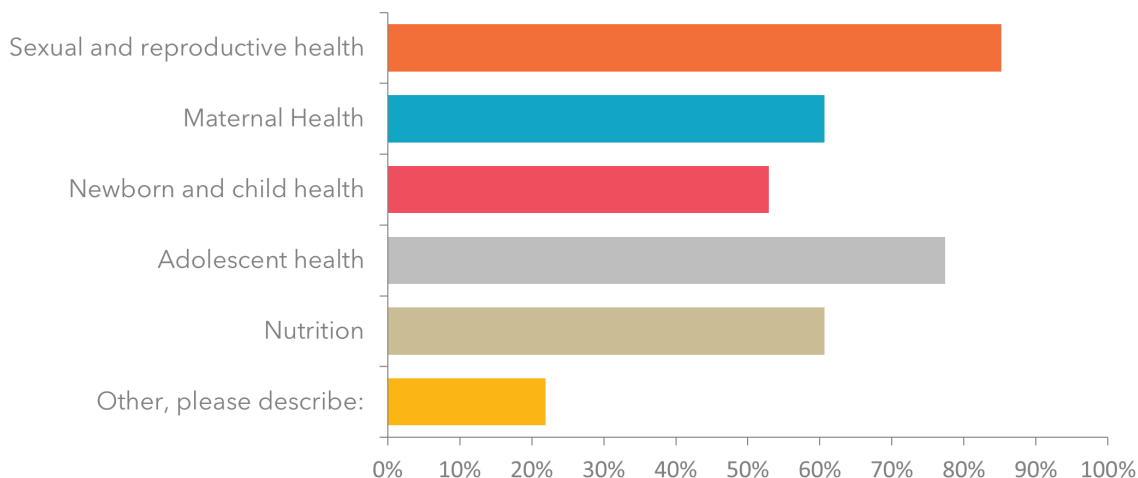
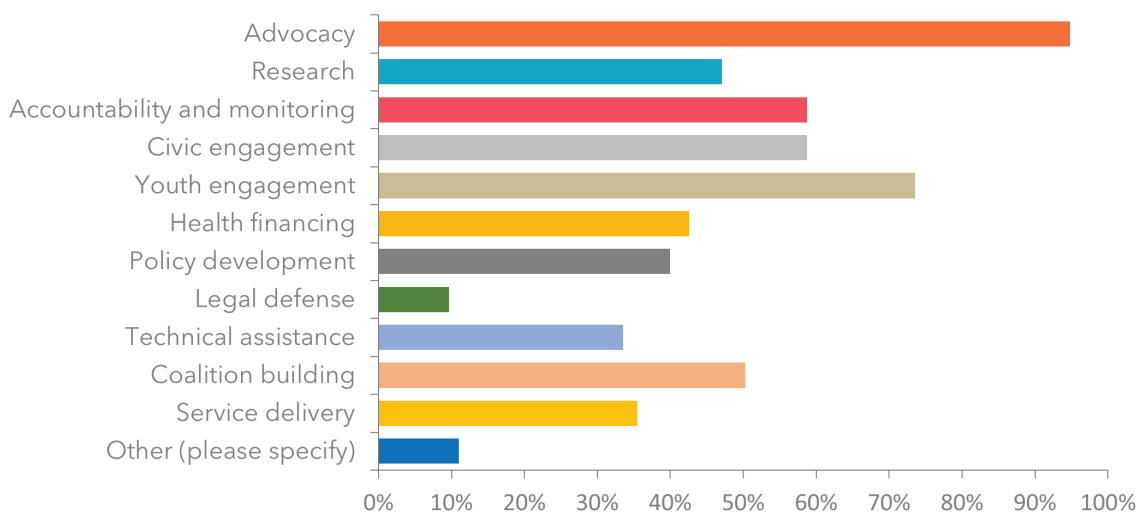


Figure 4. Survey respondent activities, 2023 CSO/YLO Community Survey

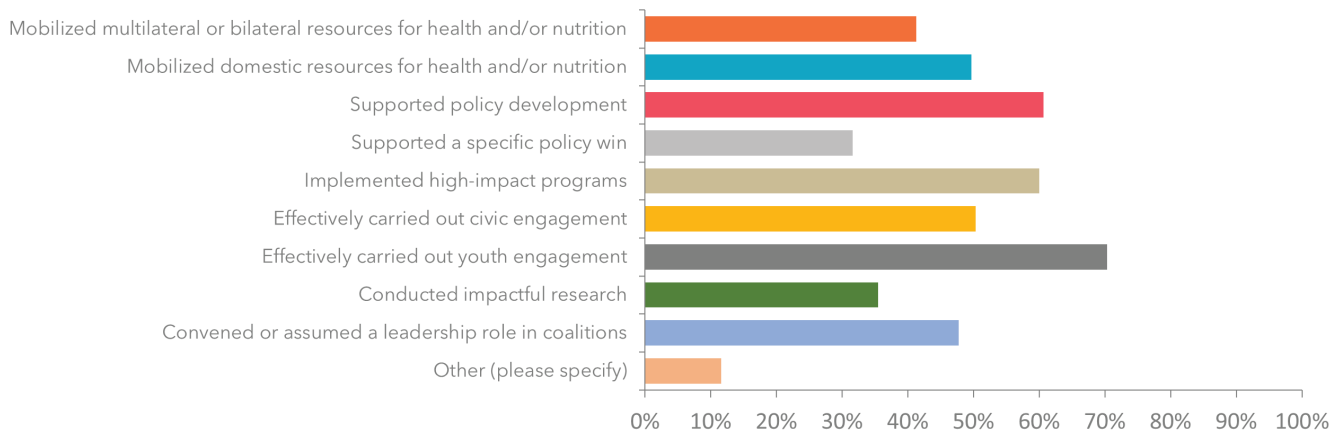


Self-Reported Accomplishments or Wins

Among respondents, 70% described their organization’s key accomplishment or “win” as effectively carrying out youth engagement. A total of 60% of respondents reported that they have supported policy development and implemented high-impact programs in the country or countries where they operate. Respondents reported additional accomplishments or “wins” as shown in Figure 5.

Respondents that selected ‘Other’ described their “wins” related to community education, mobilization, and increasing community involvement in health policy development; thought partnership with multilateral agencies; the development of knowledge products; and support to national nutrition plan development.

Figure 5. Respondents' accomplishments and "wins" from 2023 CSO/YLO Community Survey



Some respondents shared additional information about their organization's accomplishments and "wins" through a short open-ended answer in the survey. For example, one respondent that works in Kenya shared that their organization acts "as a link between the vulnerable and resourceful organizations, [as well as an] advocate for the less fortunate segments of society to teach them how they can get out of poverty." Responses like this indicate how respondents would describe their own organization's meaningful accomplishments in their own words. Analyzing the answers to this question will also help PAI understand the current strengths of organizations working in GFF partner countries and provide a more holistic understanding of the CSO/YLO landscape within each country.

C. Global Financing Facility (GFF) Engagement

Before receiving this survey, 23% of survey respondents reported that they were engaged in GFF processes, while 13% had attended a GFF information session, and 14% had heard of the GFF. Meanwhile, 20% of respondents were not familiar with the GFF before receiving the survey. Only 2% of respondents learned about the GFF through this survey, and 28% declined to answer. Respondents who reported that they knew about or had experience engaging with the GFF described the greatest value-adds of the GFF as follows:

- "A support to national CSO coalitions" by bringing together CSOs for accountability.
- "An important place for CSOs and YLOs [to be] in front of the stakeholders and the IG [Investor's Group] to advocate efficiently."
- A mechanism to "drive more equitable health expenditures in the counties we are working in."
- "High-level advocacy and technical knowledge sharing platform that provides funding for organizations driving change."
- A mechanism to "strengthen efforts to protect essential health services, build resilient front-line systems, and reach the unreached."
- A mechanism that "provides an opportunity for inclusive decision-making and transparency in GFF commitments and resources that allow for tracking and monitoring."

Generally, respondents viewed the GFF as an innovative multi-stakeholder mechanism that increases dedicated resources for SRMNCAH-N and contributes to the growth of a strong

advocacy movement in GFF partner countries. One respondent that works in Kenya said that a value add of the GFF is to “strengthen collaboration and coordination and facilitate dialogue among government ministries at national and county levels, civil society, development partners, academia, private sector and communities supporting implementation and monitoring of RMNCAH-N services.” Another respondent from Malawi agreed by stating the GFF helps “to bring voices from communities and SRMNCAH-N gaps to decision makers.”

Awareness of GFF Processes and Activities

According to the survey, 38% of respondents were aware of GFF-related activities that were underway in the country or countries where they work, while 33% were not aware of GFF-related activities, and 29% declined to respond. Regarding the GFF processes that were underway at the time of the survey:

- 23% of respondents selected GFF Multi-stakeholder Country Platform
- 22% selected CSO/YLO Country GFF Coalition
- 19% selected consultations related to the country’s Investment Case
- 25% selected other GFF meetings / stakeholder consultations
- 17% selected consultations with GFF Liaison Officer
- 1% mentioned calls for proposals for grants from GFF NGO Host

Additionally, 19% of respondents reported being very familiar with their country’s Investment Case implementation status, while 27% were somewhat familiar, and 20% were not familiar at all. Only 3% of respondents reported that this question was not applicable because they do not work in a GFF partner country—when, in fact, they did. Data from this survey question will help identify countries where some CSOs/YLOs may not be aware of the GFF processes that are underway in their countries.

CSO/YLO Engagement in GFF Activities and Processes

Among survey respondents, 37% reported that CSOs/YLOs have been invited to engage in GFF processes in the countries where they work.

- 27% of respondents reported that CSOs/YLOs have been invited to engage in GFF Multi-stakeholder Country Platform
- 24% selected CSO/YLO Country GFF Coalition
- 23% selected contributions to the country’s Investment Case
- 28% selected GFF meetings and stakeholder consultations
- 19% selected engagement with GFF Liaison Officer
- 1 respondent mentioned the Joint Learning Agenda by GFF Secretariat

A focus group participant from an organization in the Global South stated that the GFF Multi-stakeholder Country Platform (MCP) is critically important because it is meant to engage leaders from CSOs/YLOs to shape Investment Cases, determine funding, and drive accountability. However, they reported that not all CSO/YLO representatives in each MCP reflect each country’s broader CSO/YLO landscape. They also noted a need for more civil society representatives from rural areas, as well as representatives that are women and young people. An interview participant from an African NGO specializing in health reported that the role of CSOs/YLOs within the larger GFF system is to document the health needs of communities and inform GFF investments and other health interventions.

Another 24% of survey participants were unsure if CSOs/YLOs had been invited to engage in GFF activities where they work and 30% of respondents declined to answer this question.

Importantly, 9% of survey respondents reported that CSOs/YLOs have not been invited to engage in GFF processes. A survey respondent who works in Kenya reported that “information is not trickling down” to CSOs/YLOs, which is causing gaps in information and awareness. Additionally, some respondents said that country-level GFF processes are only open to “a closed group” and another participant in Tanzania said that “the Government and World Bank works rather in closed doors. Even when we pushed, we received no invitation, despite the promise.” The consensus among survey respondents was that CSO/YLO engagement has been limited by a combination of a lack of information and limited opportunities for CSO/YLO engagement, which one respondent that works in the Democratic Republic of Congo described as a “lack of will of the country’s leaders on the one hand and on the other hand lack of information.”

Similarly, an interview participant from a regional movement with CSO/YLO partners that are also engaged in GFF processes reported that they would benefit from having more information about how the GFF is operating in each country so they can identify ways to support civil society and youth engagement in these processes. This interview participant suggested that the CSCG or GFF NGO Host hold an “information seminar” for all interested stakeholders to learn more about how to collaborate and work together towards shared goals.

Among respondents, 36% reported that their organizations have engaged in GFF processes, while 25% said they had not and 10% were unsure. Meanwhile, 29% of respondents declined to answer this question. According to the survey:

- 19% of respondents have engaged in the GFF Multi-stakeholder Country Platform in the country or countries where they work
- 19% have engaged in the CSO/YLO Country GFF Coalition
- 21% have engaged in the Civil Society Coordinating Group (CSCG)
- 19% have engaged in development efforts related to the country’s Investment Case
- 25% have engaged in GFF meetings / stakeholder consultations
- 1% have engaged in calls for proposals for grants from the GFF NGO Host

Among respondents, 17% described their engagement in GFF processes as very impactful, 11% somewhat impactful, 9% were unsure and 63% declined to answer. When asked to describe their organization’s contributions to GFF processes that led to impact, one respondent in Niger reported that they had led the development of their country’s CSO advocacy and eligibility plan, while another that works in Pakistan stated they have “done advocacy for GFF processes with some policymakers.” Another respondent that works in West Africa reported that they represented CSOs in GFF processes and engaged in the development of an Investment Case that has been incorporated into one of the country’s health sector development plans. Multiple respondents reported supporting coordination among CSOs/YLOs at the country level to inform GFF processes, including the development of Investment Cases, participation in the CSCG and MCPs, and engagement through GFF meetings in-country.

GFF Visibility and Meaningful CSO/YLO Engagement

Among respondents, 19% reported that there is a CSO/YLO Country GFF Coalition in their country, while 15% said there isn’t and 33% were unsure. Another 33% of participants declined to answer this question. Based on the feedback of an interview participant from a regional movement that operates in some GFF partner countries in West Africa, it is necessary to increase the visibility of

civil society and youth focal points and ensure they are invited to participate in government and multi-stakeholder mechanisms as early in the process as possible.

Survey respondents also ranked their relationship with their GFF Liaison Officer as 3.1 out of 10, where 1 indicates no relationship between CSOs/YLOs and the GFF Liaison Officer, 5 indicates some engagement and communication, and 10 indicates active engagement and collaboration. According to multiple survey respondents and focus group participants from the Global South, the GFF Liaison Officer is a vital connection between CSOs/YLOs and country-level GFF processes. The relationships between GFF Liaison Officers and CSOs/YLOs are critical to ensuring meaningful civil society and youth engagement in GFF processes at the country level.

When asked to select the top three factors that enable meaningful CSO/YLO participation in GFF processes:

- 65% selected invitations to attend GFF meetings and stakeholder consultations
- 64% selected open communication with GFF stakeholders (e.g., GFF Liaison Officer, GFF NGO Host)
- 63% selected opportunities to engage in the GFF Multi-stakeholder Country Platform

An interview participant from a Pan-African advocacy organization suggested that it would be helpful for there to be a minimum requirement that specifies how much advance notice CSOs/YLOs should receive before a MCP meeting. CSOs/YLOs should also have access to the agenda in advance to help inform their engagement strategies. Focus group participants from the Global South echoed this sentiment and agreed that sometimes CSO/YLO representatives may not receive meeting notices in time to effectively prepare and represent the collective.

Regarding the top four barriers that hinder meaningful CSO/YLO engagement in GFF processes:

- 62% selected lack of communication from GFF stakeholders (e.g., GFF Liaison Officer, GFF NGO Host)
- 50% selected the inability to participate in GFF meetings and stakeholder consultations
- 49% selected weak in-country CSO/YLO Country GFF Coalition
- 49% selected lack of coordination among CSO/YLO stakeholders

Generally, respondents reported that CSOs/YLOs in their networks learn about opportunities to engage in health and development mechanisms through social media (53%), peer organizations or coalitions (52%), as well as WhatsApp and email groups or listservs (47%). An interview participant from a Pan-African advocacy organization shared that The GFF We Want Campaign from 2018 along with the WhatsApp group by the same name provide CSOs/YLOs with real-time information about the GFF.

During a focus group with CSOs based in the Global South, discussion participants agreed that information and exposure to GFF processes varies across CSOs/YLOs in their countries, so the CSCG Steering Committee is poised to identify and develop a plan to fill the gaps in understanding of GFF processes, specifically among YLOs. An interview participant from a Pan-African advocacy organization shared that it is important to have regular interactions with CSOs/YLOs to build rapport, establish sustainable relationships and ensure these vital stakeholders have the necessary information about the GFF.

With regard to the information CSOs/YLOs need to engage effectively in GFF processes in their country:

- 60% of respondents reported that they need more information about capacity building for domestic resource mobilization
- 59% reported they need information about how to apply for grant funding through the GFF NGO host
- 58% reported they need regular information about health financing mechanisms (e.g., country, multilateral, and bilateral)

An interview participant from a UN agency also shared that it can be challenging for stakeholders to understand the catalytic nature of the GFF and therefore maintain realistic expectations about what it can accomplish. Clear information about the role and objectives of the GFF along with clear channels of communication are vital to ensure that CSOs/YLOs understand what can be expected of the GFF and therefore how best to engage with its processes. Another interview participant from an African NGO specializing in health shared that a regular newsletter and joint online calendar with upcoming events would be an easy way to disseminate information about GFF processes in a predictable and accessible way for a variety of CSOs/YLOs, especially if these resources could be shared through existing social networks and WhatsApp groups.

Opportunities to Strengthen CSO/YLO Engagement

Respondents were also given the opportunity to share additional information about opportunities to support meaningful civil society and youth engagement in GFF and country-led SRMNCAH-N processes. One respondent in Kenya stated that the “GFF needs to make clear the role of CSOs/YLOs in monitoring the implementation of RMNCAH-N investment frameworks. Otherwise, these groups get locked out of the process. Without clear guidance, governments may not feel obliged to open the space up for CSOs/YLOs.” This statement encapsulates the GFF’s opportunity to serve as a model for meaningful CSO/YLO participation in GFF processes, as well as engagement with country governments. Multiple respondents reported that inclusive communication, clear measures of accountability, and stronger partnerships with GFF Liaison Officers will enable meaningful youth engagement in decision making processes.

A focus group participant from an organization in the Global South also shared that it is important to understand that there are different expectations for CSOs/YLOs, as well as other GFF stakeholders across countries because these actors play different roles based on the unique context and political landscape in each country. Another focus group participant followed up by agreeing that GFF stakeholders play different roles in each country depending on how the countries have decided to implement their Investment Cases. This discussion made it clear that there cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach to strengthening civil society and youth engagement in GFF processes.

Survey respondents also listed the following future opportunities to strengthen CSO/YLO engagement with GFF processes at the global, regional, and country levels: upcoming CSCG meetings, future in-person trainings and meetings related to GFF processes, the development of national CSO/YLO engagement and advocacy plans, and regular SRMNCAH-N CSO/YLO coalition meetings. A respondent also specifically mentioned World Bank Investor’s Group meetings as an opportunity for increased CSO/YLO engagement with GFF processes at the global level.

An interview participant from a UN agency shared that the UN High-Level Meetings on UHC, as well as the World Health Assembly, are two upcoming opportunities where CSOs/YLOs can play a big role in decision making. Interview participants representing a global civil society network agreed that the World Health Assembly, along with the Conference of the Parties (COP) would

provide an opportunity for CSOs/YLOs to engage with one another across a range of technical areas that intersect with SRMNCAH-N, such as climate change. Another interview participant mentioned that the upcoming Women Deliver Conference (WD2023) could be an opportunity to organize a meeting for CSOs/YLOs engaged in the GFF to meet one another in-person during the conference.

CSOs/YLOs who completed the survey and participated in focus group discussions made clear that they are eager to engage in GFF processes. One survey respondent in Kenya reported that they are “collecting data from CSO scorecards and producing shadow reports that are upscaled to regional and global levels for accountability,” which could identify opportunities to strengthen CSO/YLO engagement with GFF processes in Kenya through a methodology that could be replicated in other GFF countries. Another respondent that works in the Central African Republic suggested that “capacity building and experience sharing between CSOs/YLOs from different countries at the global and regional levels” could support engagement with GFF processes through the sharing of lessons learned. This was a common sentiment among respondents and one respondent from an INGO explained that “accountability processes, joint learning and cross-country learning processes, and capacity building on key issues such as advocacy and accountability as well as understanding government policy making and budgeting processes” will help strengthen CSO/YLO engagement in GFF processes. One respondent in Uganda also reported that surveys like this one can help support “continual engagement with YLOs by the GFF so as to hear from them.”

An interview participant from a UN agency stated that CSOs/YLOs have long been pioneers in groundbreaking advocacy and accountability measures that ripple from communities to the global stage. She said we can learn from the approaches, tactics and frameworks developed by those that led the HIV/AIDS advocacy movement, as well as those who ensured that civil society support is a prerequisite in any Global Fund action, to inform our approaches to strengthening civil society and youth engagement in GFF processes.

Engagement in Other Platforms and Mechanisms

Respondents also reported being engaged in other health- and nutrition-focused platforms, financing mechanisms and networks globally, regionally, and nationally, including: The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; Y+ Global; Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Civil Society Network; PMNCH; UHC2030; AlignMNH; International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF); YOUTH Sprint; Youth for Peace; Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance; and the Community of Practitioners on Accountability and Social Action in Health (COPASAH).

A focus group participant from the Global South reported that it is helpful to apply lessons learned from their engagement in other mechanisms to those in GFF processes, such as the CSCG Steering Committee. Another focus group participant shared that some of these different health and nutrition platforms operate in siloes, so there is a need to coordinate CSO/YLO engagement across numerous platforms so they can “come together with one main voice so we are a strong force.” A representative from a global alliance for SRMNCAH-N suggested that CSOs/YLOs come together to develop joint advocacy action plans at the country level to increase accountability and “feed into powerful advocacy” toward shared objectives across mechanisms.

D. CSO/YLO Capacity Gaps and Opportunities

Activity Levels of CSO/YLO Communities in GFF Partner Countries

The survey respondents ranked the activity of the CSO/YLO communities in which they work as 5.5 out of 10 across 33 GFF partner countries where respondents work, where 1 indicates that the CSO/YLO communities are not active; 5 indicates they are moderately active including dynamic

coalitions and partnerships; and 10 indicates they are highly active in a manner that leads to impact. In some countries, CSO/YLO communities are highly organized and contain multiple thematic working groups that lead initiatives at the national or community levels.

One respondent who works in Kenya reported that the CSO/YLO community in their country was highly active because it “has complemented the efforts of the County government, helped to address the gaps in health, and ensured that policies are implemented to achieve the UHC Agenda.” Respondents who shared examples of highly active CSO/YLO communities reported that their systems could be replicated in other country contexts.

Other respondents shared that the CSO/YLO communities they work in are dynamic but weakened by a lack of partnerships—or have just recently been set up—so they have yet to show impact as of the time of the survey. One respondent that works in Uganda reported that “implementing partners [at] National and international organization[s] see CSOs/YLOs as competitors and government restrictions are too much.” A respondent from Côte d’Ivoire stated that “CSOs very often lack the means to carry out activities although they have good ideas and projects.” Another respondent that works for an African regional organization with operations in multiple GFF partner countries stated that CSO/YLO communities are “mostly working in silos, hence not achieving as high [outcomes] as expected.”

Overall, survey respondents reported that CSOs tend to be more active in networks and coalitions. Meanwhile, YLOs face more institutional and structural barriers to participation, such as lack of funding or invitations to engage with broader CSO/YLO communities. In countries where multiple languages are spoken, linguistic barriers can also limit cooperation among CSO/YLO stakeholders within a country. This aligns with comments from multiple other participants that though many give voice to the importance of CSO/YLO collaboration, it is often difficult to put words into action in a meaningful way.

Organizational Development and Technical Capacity Gaps

A set of questions in the survey requested that respondents select the top three areas where their organization needs the most support related to organizational development and technical capacity. Respondents were also asked to select the top three ways they would like to receive capacity strengthening support and technical assistance. The results from this set of questions helps identify the most common operational challenges and technical gaps across CSOs/YLOs in GFF partner countries. It will be helpful to triangulate the survey data with the qualitative data, as well as input from current GFF grantee partners to design appropriate and impactful capacity strengthening support and technical assistance interventions.

When asked to select the top three areas of organizational development needs:

- 66% of respondents selected financial management (e.g., fundraising, business development, procurement, donor relations, grants management)
- 53% selected project performance management (e.g., M&E, SMART metrics)
- 47% of respondents selected partnerships and coalitions (e.g., coalition creation, coordination, management)

Focus group participants from organizations based in the Global South also shared that there is a need to strengthen the capacity of CSOs/YLOs to track advocacy goals and document achievements over time using SMART performance metrics. Triangulation of these data from the survey with data from the qualitative components of this assessment will help identify key areas that warrant follow-up action by the CSCG and GFF NGO Host.

During an interview with representatives from a regional movement that partners with CSOs/YLOs in several GFF partner countries in West Africa, a participant mentioned that communities have lost access to health services and CSOs/YLOs have lost funding due to COVID and other crises. Consequently, it will be vital to rebuild civil society and youth movements and networks through sustainable financial support and financial management training, which will enable them to engage in GFF processes and hold country governments accountable for their commitments to SRMNCAH-N. This interview participant also reported that governance and staff attrition are also major challenges that weaken the ability of CSOs/YLOs to engage in GFF processes.

Regarding the top four areas in which organizations need the most support related to technical capacity:

- 64% of respondents selected domestic resource mobilization
- 55% selected the latest techniques, competencies, policies, and trends related to SRMNCAH-N
- 47% selected health financing
- 47% selected advocacy

An interview participant from a Pan-African advocacy organization also reported that domestic resource mobilization is one of the main challenges facing CSOs/YLOs in their network. The interview participant also stated that CSOs/YLOs are often the only ones that can verify results and monitor whether governments have delivered on their commitments, so it is necessary to build the technical capacity of CSOs/YLOs to ensure this form of accountability and monitoring, as well. An interview participant from a global alliance for SRMNCAH-N also shared that it is necessary to ensure that CSOs/YLOs understand the complexity of health financing so that they can advocate for innovative ways to align health financing through GFF processes.

Focus group participants from organizations in the Global North who engage in GFF processes reported that the organizational development and technical capacity gaps reported by stakeholders through this Landscape Assessment should be triangulated with those presented in the GFF CSO and Youth Engagement Framework to understand what may have shifted since this Framework was designed.³

Preferred Capacity Strengthening Interventions

Survey respondents also selected the top four ways they would like to receive organizational development and technical capacity strengthening support

- 83% of respondents selected funding (e.g., grants) as the most important way their organization would like to receive support
- 53% noted their desire for more in-person trainings
- 53% also noted they would benefit from long- or short-term coaching or mentorship from a PAI staff person
 - An interview participant from a UN agency also reported that long-term mentorship tends to be highly valued by the CSOs/YLOs with whom she regularly works
- 51% of respondents said they would welcome one-on-one (1:1) working sessions or technical consultations with a technical expert

Importantly, 20% of respondents selected webinars and 19% selected virtual trainings as among their preferred capacity strengthening interventions, which is interesting to note given that both have become very common, particularly since the start of the COVID pandemic.

One interview participant who works with CSO/YLO partners also reported that they often have limited availability for meetings during the week, so it may be necessary to conduct necessary meetings, trainings or workshops on weekends. An interview participant from a Pan-African advocacy organization shared that they successfully led a two-day workshop with CSOs/YLOs from Tanzania and incorporated opportunities for peer-to-peer learning to build participants' understanding of GFF processes.

When asked about their preferences for online, in-person and hybrid interventions, 66% of survey respondents preferred a hybrid model while 17% preferred all in-person and 4% preferred all online interventions through virtual meeting platforms like Zoom. Of note, 13% of respondents declined to answer.

Taken together, responses to these questions indicate that CSOs/YLOs may prefer hybrid coaching from key experts to virtual engagement through webinars or online trainings.

E. SRMNCAH-N Policies and Health Financing Priorities and Challenges

Less than half (45%) of survey respondents reported that CSOs/YLOs in their networks are somewhat familiar with country government priorities related to SRMNCAH-N, while 33% reported they were very familiar and 5% reported they were not familiar. Of the 150 respondents, 77% said that their organizations engaged in work related to the development of policies that are supportive of SRMNCAH-N in their country contexts. Of the respondents that reported engaging in policy development and health financing in the past:

- 71% engage in advocacy activities related to SRMNCAH-N policies
- 56% support youth engagement
- 43% support the development of SRMNCAH-N policy frameworks at the country level

Respondents who engaged in this type of work listed the following key entry points for their engagement: participation in CSO/YLO networks (67%), direct advocacy toward country government representatives (55%), and engagement in country government policy-level fora (37%). A respondent that works in Ethiopia provided more information, stating that their organization received a "direct offer/request from the federal Ministry of Health at regional health offices to support and collaborate in generating evidence for decision making/policy development."

It is important to note that only 32% of respondents selected GFF processes as a key entry point for their engagement in the development and implementation of supportive SRMNCAH-N policies and health financing decisions where they work. Importantly, a respondent from Uganda stated: "We would kindly request that GFF becomes our next entry point towards supporting the implementation of SRMNCAH-N health financing in Uganda because we have seen it [the GFF] in the past advancing it [SRMNCAH-N health financing] in the best way that the country's gaps would be closed."

A few examples of the most pressing opportunities and/or needs to advance or sustain SRMNCAH-N in the survey respondents' country contexts are: reducing infant and maternal mortality; community education regarding nutrition, especially in rural areas; sharing high-quality evidence and research with communities; better monitoring of quality of care, supply chains, and access to primary health care and commodities such as contraception; better health services for persons with disabilities; increased availability of comprehensive sexuality education; and strengthening multi-stakeholder engagement and platforms. Interview participants from an African NGO specializing in health reported that CSOs/YLOs are often best suited to engage in community

education by stating that they can “adapt a message that the government has failed to deliver.” These interview participants reiterated that establishing trust within coalitions, as well as credibility with communities, is vital to ensure that communities are informed about SRMNCAH-N issues that impact them.

Challenges to Advancing SRMNCAH-N

Respondents also reported the following greatest challenges to advancing SRMNCAH-N where they work:

- 71% reported the lack of funding for civil society and youth engagement
- 63% selected lack of funding for SRMNCAH-N issues
- 52% selected limited coordination among SRMNCAH-N stakeholders

In an interview with a regional movement that partners with CSOs/YLOs in several GFF partner countries in West Africa, a participant reported that supporting a wide diversity of CSOs/YLOs is key to enabling strong engagement. For example, they shared that YLOs in rural areas and civil society stakeholders living with disabilities must be included in CSO/YLO networks.

Another interview participant that represents a UN agency agreed that it is necessary to support diverse CSO/YLO networks with a large range of expertise to advance SRMNCAH-N. This participant referenced the White Ribbon Alliance’s “What Women Want” campaign as a model for the successful engagement of CSOs/YLOs across a broad range of areas of expertise.⁴ A different interview participant from a global SRMNCAH-N organization mentioned the 1.8 Billion Young People for Change campaign and the Global Forum for Adolescents as other models of successful youth engagement in global fora.⁵

Interestingly, only 17% of respondents reported that a restrictive policy environment is a challenge to advancing SRMNCAH-N where they work. However, respondents also mentioned a lack of coordination and trust between governments and CSOs/YLOs, which a representative from an INGO with country offices in several GFF partner countries described as “inadequate support from the government for multi-stakeholder country platforms to make them fully functional.

Respondents reported social and cultural norms, as well as limited opportunities for meaningful youth engagement due to ageism as significant challenges to advancing SRMNCAH-N in the contexts in which they work. A regional organization that works in East Africa provided additional context through the survey by stating, “There is an existing gap of real-time responsive data that can be useful in tracking commitments within the communities. The voices of women and girls are still neglected and their agency to demand their rights still limited due to the patriarchal system in the country.”

Additionally, an interview participant from a global alliance for SRMNCAH-N reported that COVID, conflict, and climate change are three urgent challenges that intersect with global health in multiple ways. Given the complexity and size of these challenges, it is necessary now more than ever to rethink financing in health—and the World Bank through mechanisms like the GFF has a vital role to play in the prioritization of limited funds considering these evolving challenges.

F. Conclusion and Cross-Cutting Reflections and Implications

The consensus among those who participated in this assessment is that the GFF can serve as a model for meaningful CSO/YLO participation in SRMNCAH-N policy and financing spaces, as well as engagement with country governments. Multiple respondents reported that inclusive

communication, clear measures of accountability, and stronger partnerships with GFF Liaison Officers will enable meaningful youth engagement in GFF processes.

Survey respondents and those that participated in key informant interviews and focus group discussions recognized the value of active CSO/YLO GFF Country Coalitions and requested more opportunities to engage with the Multi-stakeholder Country Platforms where they work. Information about the barriers and enablers of meaningful civil society and youth engagement in GFF processes will illuminate key actions that the CSCG, GFF NGO Host and the GFF as a whole can support engagement by CSOs/YLOs that represent the communities that GFF investments intend to serve.

Additionally, the assessment data highlights key operational development and technical capacity gaps that the CSCG and NGO Host can use to provide cross-cutting support to CSO/YLO partners who are currently involved in GFF processes, as well as to share key information with CSOs/YLOs who are not yet involved in GFF processes at the country level. These data could be considered in the development of plans to target these gaps to ensure that CSOs/YLOs are well positioned to act as advocates to advance SRMNCAH-N in the countries where they work, as well as vital stakeholders in GFF processes.

Appendix I: Global Financing Facility (GFF) Partner Countries⁶



- Afghanistan
- Bangladesh
- Burkina Faso
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Ethiopia
- Ghana
- Guatemala
- Guinea
- Haiti
- Indonesia
- Kenya
- Liberia
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Mali
- Mauritania
- Mozambique
- Myanmar
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Pakistan
- Rwanda
- Senegal
- Sierra Leone
- Somalia
- Tajikistan
- Tanzania
- Uganda
- Vietnam
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

Endnotes

1. The NGO Host for the [Global Financing Facility \(GFF\)](#) is a multiyear initiative to support and strengthen civil society and youth engagement in GFF partner countries to contribute to GFF country-level investment outcomes and help deliver better health for all women, children and adolescents as part of the [GFF-CSO and Youth Engagement Framework 2021-2025](#). The GFF NGO Host is independent from the GFF, a multistakeholder partnership launched in 2015 to improve and support reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and nutrition (RMNCAH-N). It is hosted at [PAI](#), a civil society organization that champions policies that put women, youth, and at-risk communities in charge of their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) by working work with policymakers in Washington, D.C., and their network of more than 120 funded partners across 36 countries.
2. Global Financing Facility. (n.d.). *Where We Work*. The World Bank Group. Retrieved April 4, 2023, from <https://www.globalfinancingfacility.org/where-we-work>.
3. Global Financing Facility. (2021, October 5). *CSO and Youth Engagement Framework*. The World Bank Group. <https://www.globalfinancingfacility.org/cso-and-youth-engagement-framework>.
4. White Ribbon Alliance. (n.d.). *What Women Won Report (2022)*. Retrieved April 4, 2023, from <https://whiteribbonalliance.org/resources/what-women-won-report/>.
5. PMNCH for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health. (n.d.). *1.8 Billion Young People for Change Campaign and The Global Forum for Adolescents*. Retrieved Aril 4, 2023, from <https://pmnch.who.int/news-and-events/campaigns/1-8-billion>.
6. Global Financing Facility. (n.d.). *Where We Work*. The World Bank Group. Retrieved April 4, 2023, from <https://www.globalfinancingfacility.org/where-we-work>.