

**Global Financing Facility Learning Meeting – Civil Society Pre-Meeting**  
**14 November 2015, 9:00 – 17:30**  
**Nairobi, Kenya**  
**MEETING SUMMARY**

**Meeting context and objectives**

On 16-18 November, multi-stakeholder groups from the GFF frontrunner countries and second wave countries gathered to exchange experiences and lessons learned on implementation at a GFF Learning Meeting. This exchange aimed to focus, in part, on how to structure effective country platforms that are representative, flexible and agile, transparent and accountable, whilst also able to guide the development of robust investment cases and a mobilization of financing for implementation.

On 14 November, the GFF Investors' Group civil society representatives, Joanne Carter-*RESULTS Executive Director*, and Mesfin Teklu-*World Vision International Partnership Leader*, with the support of the Global Financing Facility Secretariat and Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), convened a one-day pre-cursor to the GFF Learning Meeting with Civil Society (CS). As a pre-cursor, This CS pre-meeting aimed to provide a forum for discussion and exchange among CS organizations from GFF front runner and second wave countries and generate recommendations for the GFF Learning Meeting on November 16-18 on optimal CS engagement in country platforms, and in the GFF more broadly (See meeting agenda in Annex 1). The specific objectives of the meeting were to:

- Share experiences from the front-runner GFF countries on CS engagement in the development of health financing strategies and RMNCAH investment cases
- Propose a robust set of minimum standards for CS engagement to share in the GFF Learning Meeting, for inclusion in the paper on country platforms and as a measure of quality assurance
- Discuss how these minimum standards can practically be implemented in frontrunner and second wave countries

The meeting brought together 45 civil CS representatives from 13 countries – including 10 of the 12 Global Financing Facility (GFF) countries. Participants came together to learn about the GFF and key GFF processes, share their experiences and engagement with the GFF to-date, and discuss recommendations for strengthening CS involvement in the GFF processes and country platforms (see List of Participants in Annex 2). All documents related to the CS meeting are available [here](#). A summary of the main points of discussion follows.

**Recommendations emanating from the meeting**

Participants unanimously agreed that the coordination of CS was critical, and that they need to foster strong relationships with key stakeholders to show the value-add of CSOs in the GFF Country Platforms. The workshop concluded with a number of key messages and recommendations to be brought forward by CS representatives to the GFF Learning Meeting and in relevant future meetings, set out below:

1. To-date, **civil society engagement has been highly variable across countries**, but many country CSOs have expressed that they have had challenges and very little exposure to the GFF. (See CSO engagement in GFF front runner countries – Annex 3)

2. **Recognize civil society value.** We, as civil society, want the GFF to be successful, which is why we want to be part of it. CSOs have a lot to add, and civil society representation is not just about ‘checking a box’. CSOs have valuable knowledge, experience and skills to contribute, including:
  - a. Technical assistance for planning and implementation, reaching hard-to-reach populations
  - b. Independent accountability
  - c. Enhancing communication and transparency with a broader network of stakeholders
  - d. Presence at sub-national level, for implementation and monitoring/accountability
  - e. Representing citizen voices
3. **Adopt the Minimum Standards** recommended by civil society to ensure that civil society and other stakeholder groups, are meaningfully engaged in GFF processes. (See minimum standards in Annex 4)
4. **Include multiple CSO representatives in Country Platforms.** CSOs are diverse and require sufficient seats to allow for adequate representation. They should be able to select their own representatives, with clear selection criteria, including representation from national and sub-national levels (included in minimum standards).
5. **Enhance communication about GFF**, including global/regional/national documents, timelines, and processes.
  - a. CSOs should be represented on the editorial board of the GFF website and involved in the development of the communications strategy.
  - b. There should also be a separate non-World Bank site for CSOs to share information on the GFF and mailing list, key resources and tools and provide a space for exchange (an information hub for CSOs, with an interactive component).
  - c. There should be a coordinating group of CSOs involved in the GFF at the global, regional, and national level, to allow for alignment of efforts and resources and regular exchange.
  - d. In the meantime, investment cases and all information on country platform focal points and timelines must be available online.
6. **Ensure adequate resources for CSO Engagement.**
  - a. There should be GFF funds set aside at the central/global level for CSO engagement. We recommend a specific grant/fund that CSOs can access directly (rather than only relying on governments to disburse a percentage of country funds to CSOs).
  - b. The GFF secretariat and Investors Group must also seek out other complementary, independent, non-GFF funds for CSO-led accountability.

## Conclusion and Next Steps

The meeting was highly valuable in aligning CS representatives from GFF countries, and global and regional representatives, around common recommendations for enhancing and ensuring meaningful CS engagement in GFF processes at national, regional, and global levels. The recommendations outlined above were brought forward to the GFF Learning Meeting, and the minimum standards were presented with a request for their adoption as part of operating guidelines for country platforms. As a result many countries present in the learning meeting noted their commitment to strengthening CSO engagement. The CSOs present during the learning meeting have also all committed to informing the broader coalitions that they represent on the deliberations, with a view of identifying a way forward. The CS Investors’ Group representatives will also submit the proposed minimum standards to the full investors’ Group for consideration.

It was also noted in the Learning meeting that the proposed Minimum Standards were not just for CSOs but are intended to ensure meaningful participation of all stakeholders at country level in the GFF processes.

The meeting was also very useful in identifying information and communication needs of CS engaged in the GFF. As identified by the meeting participants, the organizers will advance the setup of a CSO coordination group, and will support this group to develop and implement a joint strategy that responds to the needs identified by CS during this meeting. A proposed concept note for a follow up meeting to set up a coordinating group and develop a workplan is available in Annex 5.

**ANNEX 1 - Global Financing Facility Learning Meeting Civil Society Pre Meeting**  
**Fairmont The Norfolk Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya**  
**14 November 2015, 9:00 – 17:30**  
**AGENDA**

Moderated by: Rachel Wilson, Principal, Catalysts for Change LLC

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|---------------|--|
| 09:00 – 09:20 | Welcome and introductions, <i>Joanne Carter, Executive Director, RESULTS and RESULTS Educational Fund and Mesfin Teklu Tessema, Partnership Leader (Vice President), Health &amp; Nutrition, World Vision International</i>  |
| 09:20 – 09:50 | Overview of the Global Financing Facility, <i>Monique Vledder, Program Manager GFF, World Bank</i>   |
| 09:50 – 11:00 | Interactive discussions on CSO perspectives on meaningful engagement in the Global Financing Facility <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Joanne Carter, Executive Director, RESULTS and RESULTS Educational Fund</i></li><li>• <i>Mesfin Teklu Tessema, Partnership Leader (Vice President), Health &amp; Nutrition, World Vision International</i></li><li>• <i>Melissa Wanda, Advocacy Program Officer, Family Care International Kenya</i></li><li>• <i>Rose Mlay, National Coordinator, White Ribbon Alliance Tanzania</i></li><li>• <i>Arsene Binanga, Tulane University, Democratic Republic of Congo</i></li><li>• <i>Dr. Filimona Bisrat Semunigus, Director, CCRDA Core Group</i></li></ul> |
| 11:00 – 11:20 | Coffee break   |
| 11:20 – 12:10 | Working groups: Setting Minimum Standards for GFF Country Platforms to Enhance Participation, Transparency, Independence and Accountability  |
| 12:10 – 12:45 | Report back from working groups  |
| 12:45 – 13:45 | Lunch  |
| 13:45 – 16:00 | Working groups: operationalizing the minimum standards to ensure effective civil society engagement in planning, implementation and accountability<br>Coffee break during group work   |
| 16:00 – 16:15 | Coffee break   |
| 16:15 – 17:00 | Report back from group work  |

17:00 – 17:30

Next steps and closing

**ANNEX 2 – List of Participants**

Name	Title	Organization	Email	Country - Region
Urbain Abega Akongo	Coordinator	FESADE	<a href="mailto:info@fesade.org">info@fesade.org</a>	Cameroon
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Name	Title	Organization	Email	Country - Region
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### **ANNEX 3 - CSO engagement in the GFF front runner countries**

Meaningful engagement of CS organizations in the GFF proposed country platforms is critical for achieving the GFF vision of ending preventable maternal, newborn, child and adolescent deaths and address equity gaps. It also requires a deliberate effort. Civil society present at the meeting noted that CS engagement in GFF processes in countries had been very variable. Many CS experienced difficulty in accessing information on the GFF process, country platforms and investment cases, and were therefore not systematically included in the processes. A panel of CS organizations from the GFF frontrunner countries highlighted this lack of systematic engagement of CSO platforms and networks in GFF discussions and a lack of information around the GFF in countries. Panelists noted the need for an explicit recognition by the GFF of the value and central role of CS and an associated systematization of its inclusion in all GFF processes.

Melissa Wanda, Advocacy Officer, FCI Kenya, noted that the Ministry in Kenya has initiated a consultative process around the development of the investment case. It included CSO representation in two broad consultations during which feedback on the investment case was sought. CSOs were able to share concerns on the flow of funds – which is particularly important in Kenya’s new devolved setting, on the role of CSOs in implementation and accountability and on the need for increased prioritization of sexual and reproductive health and rights and in particular family planning. Melissa noted that these recommendations were addressed. While the nomination of a CSO on the Kenya country platform, or as a designated GFF focal point remains unresolved, the consultative process in Kenya has provided space for input.

Filimona Bisrat Semunigus, Director of the CCRDA Core Group in Ethiopia was not involved in the process for developing the Ethiopia investment case but noted that organized CSO networks are critical to facilitating their involvement in these types of processes. He highlighted the example of the Christian relief CSO forum, which was established in 2012 with financial support from GAVI and now includes over 300 NGOs including over 140 health NGOs. He noted that the health forum which coordinates CSOs within the sector is represented on most national taskforces including the health population nutrition and RMNCAH national taskforce and other taskforces, the Global Fund Country Coordination Mechanism and others. He noted that this successful forum provides a space for CSOs to discuss government policies and ensure CSO perspectives are included in national documents through representation. The forum has reduced duplication of efforts through a coordinated action plan and information sharing mechanisms. He noted that this coalition built on GAVI and GFATM resources and called for more coordinated efforts among CSOs as a means to facilitate meaningful engagement.

Rose Mlay, Coordinator of the White Ribbon Alliance in Tanzania noted that the WRA as such was not involved in the GFF discussions, and that it was through its members, in particular the UN institutions that it was able to get information on the GFF and reach out to the Ministry with a request for inclusion. She was able to obtain the documents related to the GFF after proactive requests and was asked by the government to attend the learning meeting. She called for the systematic engagement of CS in all GFF related processes in countries.

Arsene Binanga who works for Tulane University in the Democratic Republic of Congo shared his experience as president of a multisectoral and multi-stakeholder group working on family planning that has successfully since 2010 advanced the FP agenda in DRC. While not engaged with the GFF, the multi-stakeholder group has noted that the partners working on the GFF in DRC were not sufficiently inclusive

of the FP agenda and have been attempting to integrate the working group to ensure that they are involved in the development of the investment case.

## **ANNEX 4 – Recommended Minimum Standards for GFF Country Platforms to Enhance Participation, Transparency, and Accountability**

The GFF requires that all country platforms embody two principles of the Business Plan: inclusiveness and transparency. To support countries to operationalize these principles, the GFF has established minimum standards that countries are expected to adhere to. These can be found in the GFF Business Plan Annex 6. “Minimum standards for country platforms”.

To strengthen the minimum standards, civil society organizations (CSOs) engaged in the GFF processes propose expanding on the existing principles of inclusiveness and transparency, and adding principles of independence and accountability. They provide below an enhanced list of Minimum standards for country platforms. The below recommendations result from the CSO Pre Meeting to the Global Financing Facility Learning Meeting, organized by the GFF Investors’ Group CSO representatives, with support from the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health on 14 November 2015 in Nairobi, Kenya. The list reflects perspectives from 45 representatives from 13 countries, including ten of the twelve GFF countries.<sup>1</sup>

### **Proposed minimum standards for country platforms:**

#### ***Inclusiveness and participation***

1. Key constituencies for the country platform will include: government (both national and decentralised, as relevant); civil society<sup>2</sup>; private sector; affected populations; technical agencies (H4+ and others); multilateral, bilateral agencies and foundations; parliamentarians, and health care professional associations.
2. Members of the civil society, health care professional associations, private sector (PS), and affected populations constituencies should be selected for membership in the country platform in a participatory and transparent manner. They should be identified by their own constituencies through existing broad, effective, and inclusive platforms, where possible covering the continuum of care. Investor Group (IG) representatives for the relevant constituencies should support countries in the identification of existing national platforms within their constituencies. The identified platforms should develop and make public selection criteria and a selection process. These criteria should include the ability of the selected representative to systematically consult with groups within and outside their constituency for broader consultation.
3. Country platforms will include at least two seats for CSOs, representing broad coalitions. Country platforms should also permit a number of non-member organizations access to meetings and resources through observer status.
4. Country platform constituency members will undertake a process of meaningful, participatory and inclusive consultation with other stakeholders within their constituencies in a manner that provides them with opportunities to express broadly representative views on the GFF’s proposed plans, financing arrangements, implementation and monitoring, and allows the country platform to consider and respond to them. Constituency specific consultations and updates should be organized on an on-going basis and at regular intervals and should be supported financially by the platform. One clearly indicated member

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<sup>1</sup> The list also builds on recommendations in the Population Action International paper *RAISING THE BAR: Recommendations to Strengthen the GFF Minimum Standards for Country Platforms to Enhance Participation, Transparency, and Accountability* and the outcomes of various PMNCH CSO constituency telephone and online consultations.

<sup>2</sup> Defined as not-for-profit non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations

for each constituency will act as the focal point for constituency engagement, and will be responsible for developing and implementing the constituency engagement strategy.

5. The country platform will develop and implement a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) for engaging with a broader range of stakeholders that are not part of the country platform. A draft of the SEP will be made public, and the country platform will seek the views of stakeholders that are not members of the country platform on its content and implementation. The SEP might include details on constituency specific outreach, but will go beyond to engage groups that might not be represented on the country platform.
6. Participation in the country platform implies full and active involvement of all constituencies, from the beginning of the process, including:
  - a. Preparing and implementing the Investment Case and the health financing strategy, including active participation in meetings, receiving and contributing to the preparation of materials (reviewing and inputting on drafts, being part of planning processes, etc), determining the approach to quality assurance, review drafts, endorsing the final version and implementing activities as relevant.
  - b. Agreeing to changes to the Investment Case and/or health financing strategy in the course of implementation.
  - c. Determining the approach to technical assistance and capacity building to support implementation of the Investment Case and health financing strategy.
  - d. Receiving and reviewing data about performance in the course of implementation.
  - e. Reporting on implementation.
  - f. Being fully engaged in development and operationalizing of accountability mechanisms for tracking implementation and financing flows.

### ***Transparency***

The following documents will be made publicly available on MOH and GFF websites and will be disseminated to a listserv (with voluntary registration) within the following timeframes; for documents approved by the country platform, they will be made public within a month of approval; for meeting summaries and action points, they will be made available within a month of the meeting; and for documents that are being tabled for discussion or review, they will be made available at least two weeks before relevant meetings or deadlines:

1. Country platform operational procedures, including:
  - member selection processes, criteria, length and replacement of members;
  - terms of reference;
  - current list of members (with names/designations and contact details alongside agreed roles and responsibilities);
  - minimum frequency of meetings and timelines for provision of documents ahead of and after meetings;
  - voting rules including quorums; and
  - stakeholder engagement plan.
2. Updates on all meetings and opportunities for input, including:
  - minutes and attendees of meetings at which Investment Cases and health financing strategies were developed (including meeting attendees and documentation explaining decisions around the prioritization of particular interventions/approaches);
  - minutes and attendees of all further meetings, specifically logging agreed actions following implementation reviews of the Investment Case, as well as responsible persons (including their functions- to allow follow up in case of turnover) and timelines for carrying out those actions;

- and
- versions of investment cases and documents made available for input, with modality for input and timelines (for instance if placed online for a web-based consultation) – and updated versions including rationale for how input was included or why it was not.
3. The final Investment Case and health financing strategy, including the results framework and the costed implementation plan.
  4. Agreements between financiers about which elements each will cover.
  5. Disbursement data from each financier and budget analysis of government funds covering allocation, disbursement and utilisation/absorption.
  6. Progress reports on the achievement of targets in the results framework, compiled using high-quality, referenced data and evidence from multiple sources (including independent sources).
  7. Evaluation reports, compiled using high-quality, referenced evidence from different sources.
  8. Quality and timely progressive reports with articulated evidence based results.

For all country platform meetings, ensuring:

- a. All consultation meetings are posted at least 2 weeks in advance on the GFF and MOH websites and through email – including all documents, and a list of participants with emails so that representatives can be reached ahead of time
- b. Where possible meetings are available live through webcast for those who want to listen.

### ***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 progress and reporting.
2. 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.
3. An independent annual review of the adherence to the minimum standards above and to the country platforms' own operational procedures and stakeholder engagement plan should be produced and made public.
4. Should any citizen of the countries where the GFF is implemented, or any member of the country platform, hold a grievance related to the principles above not being respected, they will have final recourse to an ombudsman, according to procedures drafted and made public by the GFF Secretariat. The GFF secretariat will have a redress policy that outlines the consequences of non-compliance to the minimum standards.<sup>3</sup>
5. 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.

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<sup>3</sup> The GFF secretariat has the fiduciary obligation to ensure that a transparent and accountable process has been followed according to World Bank rules and regulations and may block IDA/Trustfund agreement if a set of agreed upon indicators are not met: these could include for instance stakeholder representation on country platform, timely provision of information, investment case open for public comment etc.

**ANNEX 5 - GFF CSO coordination group meeting**  
**Draft concept note – for discussion (version 25 Nov 2015)**

On 14 November, 45 civil society (CS) representatives from 13 countries including, 10 of the 12 Global Financing Facility (GFF) countries, met in Nairobi to share their experiences and engagement with the GFF and share recommendations for strengthening CS involvement in the GFF processes and country platforms. The meeting found that the participation of CS in the GFF countries has been variable, and in most instances, limited. CS highlighted a lack of systematic engagement of CSO platforms/networks in GFF discussions and a lack of information around the GFF in countries. They noted the need for an explicit recognition by the GFF of the value and central role of CS and an associated systematization of its inclusion in all GFF processes. They proposed to this effect the adoption by the GFF of a set of minimum standards for country platforms that aim to strengthen inclusiveness, participation, transparency and accountability. Full meeting report and minimum standards available in annex 1 and 2 respectively.

CS during this meeting also noted the need for better CS coordination within country, between countries and between country, regional and global levels with a view to enhancing their engagement in the GFF. They called for the creation of a coordinating group of key CS actors in the GFF at the global, regional and national levels that would enable information exchange, a better coordination of the various activities led by CS around the GFF, and aligned support to the CS representatives on the investors' group and to CS in the GFF priority countries. They also outlined the resources they require to better engage in the GFF processes.

**Meeting objectives**

This meeting will bring together key global and regional members of the GFF CSO coordination group and related platforms, along with representation of country level CSOs, and will aim to develop a strategy around strengthening CSO engagement in the GFF. This strategy will identify how partners can best meet the needs expressed by CS during the 14 November meeting, and will identify which partners will take on responsibilities for which actions, based on their comparative advantages.

**Meeting outputs**

- Terms of reference and operational guidelines for the coordination group (including preliminary thinking on how to best identify national CS focal points)
- A strategy that outlines key areas of work for global and regional partners; including how to support national CSOs in the GFF priority countries
- A list of immediate next steps, responsible parties and timelines – where areas of work are sufficiently advanced

**Meeting duration**

1 day

**Meeting participants / proposed CSO coordination platform global and regional members**

GFF IG - Mesfin Teklu  
GFF IG – Joanne Carter  
PMNCH – Kadi Toure  
PMNCH - Maty Dia  
GHC - Christine Sow  
RHSC – Preethi Sundaram  
IPPF – Alison Marshall  
Gutmacher - Ann Starrs  
Population Council - John Townsend  
Save the Children – TBD  
WRA – Betsy McCallon  
CHESTRAD – Lola Dare  
AHBN – Aminu Magashi Garba  
JHPIEGO – Angela Mutunga  
MSH – Matt Saxton  
World Aids – Rosemary Mburu  
AMREF – Joachim Osur  
GHV – Susannah Hurd  
Catalysts for Change – Rachel Wilson  
GAVI CSO rep - TBD  
GFATM CSO rep - TBD  
SUN CSO rep - TBD  
National CSO partners - TBD