

Civil Society (CS) Engagement in the Global Financing Facility (GFF): Country-level Perspectives

A Webinar Hosted by Global Health Council and RESULTS Educational Fund

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Introduction & Welcome - Dr. Christine Sow, Global Health Council

Panelist Presentations

Report Overview – Susannah Hurd, Global Health Visions and Rachel Wilson, Catalysts for Change

Civil Society Engagement in the Global Financing Facility: Analysis & Recommendations

High level overview provided below. See PPT for additional detail.

- Commissioned by RESULTS Educational Fund and completed by Global Health Visions and Catalysts for Change, the report provides an analysis of CS engagement in the GFF in the four front-runner countries (DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania), and draws lessons from those experiences and from CS engagement in other global initiatives (Global Fund, Gavi, and the SUN movement); it includes recommendations for enhancing CS engagement in the GFF moving forward.

Key Findings and Lessons Learned:

- Consistent, timely communication is critical.
 - Country level CSOs were largely unengaged. When they were engaged, they had to hunt down information or leverage existing relationships.
- More time is needed to get the process right.
 - The GFF process seemed “rushed” and civil society received very little warning of upcoming meetings. This resulted in low attendance, particularly among indigenous NGOs.
- Resources are necessary to support CSO engagement.

- There is a need for adequate resources to support participation in consultations. This has been a significant barrier to engagement of CS to date.
- Diverse representation and transparency in selection of CSOs is vital.
 - The selection process for civil society participants was haphazard, not transparent or systematic. Selection was often based on prior relationships.
- Multi-stakeholder and CSO county platforms and learning opportunities are beneficial.
 - Several participants noted the Nairobi workshop was a turning point; it opened the door for better engagement. Susannah emphasized that these learning opportunities are crucial for meaningful engagement of CS.
 - We have seen CS platforms be very effective among other key initiatives (i.e. Gavi, SUN initiative).
- The value-added of civil society must be defined and recognized.
 - Many CS interviewees felt their contribution was checking a box, rather than being meaningfully engaged. There was a lot of confusion and missed opportunities early on. There needs to be clear entry points for the meaningful engagement of CS.

Minimum Standards:

- The GFF Business Plan includes minimum standards for country platforms. However, a number of CSOs worked hard to develop a more comprehensive set of minimum standards.
- These are built upon PAI and AHBN's document: "[Raising the Bar: Recommendations to Strengthen Global Financing Facility Minimum Standards for Country Platforms.](#)" And then, led by the 2 CSOs on the Investors Group and the CSO group that gathered in Nairobi in November 2015 for the pre-meeting to the GFF Learning Meeting, the recommended min standards were expanded and refined to be more comprehensive.
- *See Annex in these notes for complete draft of the Minimum Standards.*

Key Report Recommendations:

- Rachel noted that since the time the report was published, several actions have already taken place.
- 1) Implement and Track Minimum Standards for RMNCAH Country Platforms in GFF Countries.
 - It is not sufficient for the standards to just be promoted at the global level, there must be advocacy at the country level for those standards to be adapted at the country level and implemented, and to ensure there is tracking and reporting.
- 2) Ensure Timely and Transparent Communications about the GFF and Its Processes.
 - There is a need for widely and easily accessible, up-to-date information on the GFF processes – at global, regional, national, and sub-national levels.

- It is critical to develop a communications strategy.
- 3) Establish platforms for civil society to engage GFF in a coordinated, representative, and streamlined manner.
 - Platforms with country-specific information on them need to be developed and accessible.
- 4) Resource and support civil society engagement.
 - Rachel underscored this is critically important. In particular, the authors heard that people who were in the cities were well represented but the perspectives of those further out, were not well captured.
 - We need to make the investment case for resourcing civil society participation, need to outline what the resources would support and what the benefits would be.

Investors Group Update – Dr. Mesfin Teklu, World Vision International, Civil Society Representative to the GFF Investors’ Group

Investors’ Group Retreat, Feb. 17-18 in London

- Discussed country roll out and implementation; the GFF is currently being implemented in 12 countries but aims for a total of 66 countries.
- At the meeting, the minimum standards were presented, which was positively welcomed.
- Two of the recommended principles were included in the minimum standards in the GFF business plan – transparency and inclusiveness; but the revised set of minimum standards builds these principals out further, and adds additional guidance around independence and accountability. *(See Annex for revised minimum standards.)*
- The Investors Group fell short of endorsing the minimum standards. They recommended that the minimum standards be included in the country guidance document. That is where the minimum standards will be placed. This is anticipated from the Secretariat, and will be shared shortly.
- Mesfin emphasized that we should all use our networks and presence in countries to influence the country platforms. We should not rely solely on the Investors Group to disseminate the country guidance.
- In terms of resource mobilization, there is a plan to replenish [IDA](#). That is a big agenda item for GFF this year.
 - The Global Fund is also launching replenishment this year. The Global Fund will also be looking at RMNACH, which is an expanded mandate for them.

Country Updates:

- On the country updates, all 12 countries except India are at different phases (India is still determining their involvement, so they are not yet moving forward).
- Some countries are at early stages (i.e. Bangladesh and Nigeria) but other countries are further along.

- Tanzania was the first country to receive funding and Kenya has finished their investment case and is now turning attention to county level planning.
- Nigeria is developing their investment case to focus on the conflict zone of northeast. They have requested emergency funding for that region and the GFF is considering that request.

Nigeria Update - Dr. Aminu Magashi Garba, African Health Budget Network

- During the World Bank/IMF Spring Meeting in D.C., there was a UHC financing forum, at which Aminu was able to talk with Nigeria's Minister of Health, the head of the Nigeria's Primary Health Care Development Agency, and the GFF focal person in the Ministry of Health.
- The investment case for GFF will likely be ready for submission in June/July.
 - Much of the Investment Case will aim to expand coverage of the national health insurance scheme.
 - There will not be a new country platform for the GFF, but rather, they will use the National Health Act multi-stakeholder group, sub-committee on health financing and equity
- Nigeria has made an emergency request to the World Bank for financing for the northeast conflict zone, which is likely to be: US\$125M from IDA, and US\$20M from the GFF Trust Fund.
- Regarding CSO engagement, the MoH indicated that they have not been able to hold a meeting because of logistics and funding constraints.
- Aminu committed that Community Health and Research Initiative ([CHR](#)) would provide funds and support to organize a CSO meeting on the GFF in May.

*****Additional updates received after the webinar*****

- The MoH is interested in developing a roadmap for the process.
- There is considerable interest among the Nigerian government in health financing, with a particular focus on efficiency, given high current spending without commensurate results.
- There is also interest in moving quickly in the conflict-affected northeast.
 - The 6 northeastern states (Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Yobe, Taraba and Gombe) held a meeting in Abuja on 21st and 22nd April with World Bank officials to deliberate on IDA and GFF. In the meeting were representatives of Ministry of Health and Finance, and the National Primary Health Care Development Agency.
 - Issues discussed and agreed include:
 - Each of the states will establish a Project Implementation Unit for IDA/GFF
 - Funds will be shared according to an agreed formula
 - Each state will sign a MoU with the World Bank, and the Ministry of Finance will serve as the Guarantor. The IDA funds will be paid by the

state via a monthly deduction formula to be removed from their monthly statutory allocations from Federal Government.

- The National Primary Health Care Development Agency will provide technical supervision and support for state level implementation.

Uganda Update – Richard Mugenyi, Reproductive Health Uganda

- Got technical input from AFP and IPPF and convened different stakeholders to discuss the GFF in Uganda.
- They wanted to use the A Promise Renewed (APR) platform, but it was expiring and it was not strong on FP and adolescents.
- Convinced stakeholders focused on FP to engage, and found out that the World Bank delegation was coming to Uganda in October; leveraged contacts at the Bank, WHO, and MoH to get invited to a meeting with MoH colleagues.
- The MoH, through the MCH working group, convened CSOs.
- The work being done has yielded some results.
 - MoH has decided to get young people on board, to work on the adolescents part of the Investment Case.
- Uganda was an improvement from the four front-runner countries, but there were still challenges.
 - Adolescent health is still weak.
 - Meeting times and deadlines kept changing.
 - Not sure how the draft came out.
 - Still not ideal on selection process of participants.

Other Country Updates – Maty Dia, Save the Children, PMNCH Focal Point for Africa

Overview

- The process varies widely in different countries, but cannot say there has been a significant engagement of CS.
- Process has been rushed in most instances; often CS lacks resources for coordinating, and meeting notices often come too late to travel or to get funding to attend a meeting.
- Working on ensuring all coalitions working on RMNACH in country are aware of GFF. Right now, even relevant ministry departments are unaware of GFF.
 - But, there can be issues when there are several RMNACH platforms in one country.
 - Not creating new country platforms.
- The FP community is the most active one.

Senegal, Cameroon, DRC, Mozambique

- **Senegal:** Has held several discussions with partners.
 - In Senegal the MOH is very open.

- **Cameroon:** In Cameroon, the MOH is very open too.
- **DRC:** It is quite difficult because of the size of the country; the county levels are often not aware of the GFF processes.
 - FP community is quite active.
 - We are talking with partners to organization a national consultation.
- **Mozambique:** Also talking with partners about trying to organize a national consultation.

Partner Support for CS GFF Engagement

- GHC has supported with webinars in different languages to inform on the GFF.
 - Francophone webinar was very well-received.
 - Hope to hold webinars even more often.
- CHESTRAD is working on a toolkit on what the GFF is, how CS can be engaged meaningfully. This will be ready soon.
- African Health Budget Network has been displaying important information on their website as well.
- We are hoping to have more national consultations, so people and coalitions are aware and can be part of discussions.
- CSOs sometimes are competitive and keep information available only to themselves.
- Please contact Maty directly to ask about or share information about discussions, consultations, engagement efforts so she can link up groups working on the GFF in countries to share information and work together.

Questions & Answers

Q: What is being done to encourage youth participation?

- Mesfin: In terms of engagement, in the Investors Group, we keep hearing from participating countries that the selection process for CS engagement is an issue. We are considering how to better structure this. It varies from country to country.
- Mesfin shared that he has not seen particular reference for youth participation, which is a gap. Under the minimum standards, it mentions youth groups as one of the groups who should be involved. The countries need to decide the appropriate structure to engage all stakeholders. GFF seeks to bring together CS and stakeholders across the lifecourse, but we have a long way to go.
- Rachel agreed with Mesfin. There needs to be a lot more education for people to understand that CS is a broad and diverse set of stakeholders. That is why there are specific groups (like youth) noted in the minimum standards. It is important to advocate for multiple CS representatives. The representation to date has been very high level and not as broad and diverse as we hope it will become. This is an area to push on.
- Maty emphasized the importance of finding out who the MoH focal point is in each country, and coordinating with other interested CSOs and groups in the country.

Q: Is it right that Investors Group hopes to agree on indicators at June meeting? Can we comment?

- Susannah: In the [GFF Business Plan](#), available online, there are preliminary indicators listed in an Annex.
- Mesfin: This will be an agenda item in June. The indicators measure things like the ability of government to track financial flows. GFF will not develop indicators to monitor impact (i.e. mortality etc). The indicators will really be looking at the financial side.

Q: Who can be contacted in Cameroon to access the GFF platform?

- Contact forthcoming; in the mean time, contact Maty for more information.

Q: Are there examples where minimum standards have been implemented?

- Maty noted that in Liberia and Cameroon, we pushing these at a national level; but there has been push back from some people who sees these as a document driven from the global level, rather than being country owned. But, it is owned by everyone.

Q: Are any GFF investment cases being made available online?

- Mesfin: Kenya was public online but has since been taken offline. Tanzania and DRC have been finalized but are not online; this is a big challenge.
- Christine: We have been advocating for these to be shared online, but we must continue to push for this.
- [Note: Suzanna Dennis found the Kenya Investment Case online; it will be sent out with the webinar notes.]

Wrap Up

- The GFF website is still being built, but the current version includes basic information and some key documents including the GFF Business Plan: GlobalFinancingFacility.org
- We will continue webinars before and after Investors Group meetings, in English and French, to get input and then provide updates after.
- The webinar today was about country level experiences; very open to suggestions.
- The webinars can be found on GHC website under advocacy hub.
- Other resources: PMNCH
- The GFF Secretariat is rolling out the communications strategy.
- An email will go out to all participants, with notes and the webinar PPT presentation, as well as contact emails for panelists, the Country Update PPT from the Investors Group, and the Kenya Investment Case.

Annex: Minimum Standards

Recommended Minimum Standards for RMNCAH Country Platforms to Enhance Participation, Transparency, and Accountability

DRAFT 2/4/2016

The GFF requires that all RMNCAH country platforms in GFF countries 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.¹

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 society²; private sector; affected populations; technical agencies; multilateral, bilateral agencies and foundations; parliamentarians, and health care professional associations.
2. All platform members constituencies should be selected in a participatory and transparent manner. They should be identified by their own constituencies based on selection criteria developed and made public by existing broad, effective, and inclusive platforms, where possible covering the continuum of care. Given the diversity of civil society, country platforms should include at least two seats for CSOs, representing broad coalitions.
3. Terms of reference (TORs) of selected country platform representatives will include systematic consultation with groups within and outside their constituency for broader input. Constituency specific consultations and updates should be organized on an on-going basis and at regular intervals. The platform should optimally include financing for constituency engagement as required. If financing from the platform is not available, financing should be sought from the GFF Trustfund or partners.
4. A Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) for engaging with a broader range of stakeholders that are not part of the country platform should be endorsed by the country platform. The draft of the SEP should be made public, and the country platform should 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

¹ 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. It also builds upon: PAI and AHBN. 2015. *Raising the Bar: Recommendations to Strengthen Global Financing Facility Minimum Standards to Country Platforms*.

² Defined as not-for-profit non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations

- should go beyond to engage groups that might not be represented on the country platform.
5. 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 (IC) 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 major changes to the IC and/or health financing strategy in the course of implementation.
 - c. Agreeing to the approach to technical assistance and capacity building to support implementation of the IC 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 should be made publicly available on MOH and GFF websites and should be disseminated to a listserv (with voluntary registration) within the following timeframes; for documents approved by the country platform, within a month of approval; for meeting summaries and action points, within a month of the meeting; and for documents that are being tabled for discussion or review, at least two weeks before relevant meetings or deadlines:

1. Country platform operational procedures, including:
 - member selection processes, criteria, TORs, length and replacement of members;
 - current list of members (with names/designations, contact details, agreed roles/responsibilities);
 - 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, 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; 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 results framework and 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:

1. 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
2. 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 and reporting. In those countries that choose to do so 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, otherwise other mechanisms to review reports on GFF results need to be put in place
2. An independent review of the adherence to the country platforms' own operational procedures should be conducted and made public at least every two years.
3. The country platform should propose and implement a grievance mechanism to receive and facilitate resolution of concerns and grievances from project affected parties related to the minimum standards. Should the country platform not respond to grievances in a timely manner, these should be directed to an ombudsman, according to a grievance mechanism and redress policy endorsed by the GFF Investors Group.
4. 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.