



Community Working Group on Health (CWGH) Zimbabwe

Bridging between local engagement and global processes
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A challenge for Switzerland: Achieving health for all in a changing world
Health in Switzerland's foreign policy and international cooperation

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Background

- The upcoming (SDGs) due to replace the MDGs in 2015 are expected to have a “people-centred” agenda where there is strong focus on community involvement and engagement
- Civil society in the South plays an important role in ensuring that community voices are included in the development agenda
- However there are capacity challenges in occupying the different spaces and platforms to effectively influence global processes



Contextualizing local engagement and global processes

Local engagement

- an ongoing process where CSOs interact with communities in pursuit of a collective vision for the benefit of a community.
- primarily deals with transforming communities towards change
- Promotes inclusivity as marginalized groups (women, youth, the elderly, disabled) are availed with platforms to participate
- includes a variety of approaches, such as dialogues, information delivery, consultation, involvement and collaboration in decision-making



Global processes



- Spaces and platforms at regional and international level that shape the development agenda
- Participation of civil society in global platforms is key in promoting ownership and support of the outcomes (what is doable, what is relevant or achievable)
- Promoting the accountability of states on commitments made



A case of Community Working Group on health (CWGH)



- Community Working Group on Health (CWGH) – A network of civic organizations that aim to enhance community participation in health.
- Uses a bottom up approach to ensure that communities actively and meaningfully participate in processes.
- Empowers communities on their health rights and entitlements and to demand for access to quality health services
- Works with community health structures (HCCs, VHWs) - capacity building



Village Health Workers after training workshop





The work of CWGH

- Organizing involvement of communities in health actions within their communities and around Primary Health Care
- Mobilizing communities, resources and actions around policies and monitoring their implementation
- **LOCAL ENGAGEMENT** – capacity building, consultative meetings, dialogues, feedback meetings, monitoring of health services using participatory methods, community advocacy. Work with government ministries, local authorities and community leadership



NATIONAL ENGAGEMENT



- Use of various available platforms for advocacy. - Parliamentary portfolio committee on health, Health services board, associations,
- Various networks on health such as HTF, RBF steering committees, CWGH annual National conference
- Advocacy around Removal of user fees for vulnerable groups (barriers to access), health financing, 15% Abuja declaration, review of policies
- Inclusion of the right to health in Constitution.
- Budget process - community mobilization for pre and post budget input





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health financing to
achieve SDGs**

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GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

- CWGH is part of various regional networks which participates in regional and International development forums with the aim of increasing civic presence at global level.
- e.g EQUINET, People's Health Movement, Forums used provide an opportunity in ensuring that community voices are included in the development agenda through capacity building , pooling of resources,
- Publisizing global processes





Challenges faced by civil society

- Development processes are neither linear, simple nor always coherent need for concerted action of multiple agencies with differing interests and are influenced by a wide range of factors
- This complicates efforts and role of civil society in influencing global health agenda.
- Limited opportunities/ platforms for engagement/Global processes are inaccessible for most CSOs in the South
- Gaps between consultation and real influence/ effective use of available spaces due to capacity gaps
- Limited manner in which they draw and accommodate CSO ii



Challenges

- Fragmented efforts by CSOs
- Funding biased towards topical issues
- Funding – attending of regional/ international platforms
- Limited feedback on processes
- Capacity gaps of CSOs- limited trainings,
- At national level, CSOs are viewed with a lot of suspicion
- Limited collaboration between CSOs and the state
- Limited translation of policies into action



How to bridge the gap

- Building community coalitions for engagement/ Coalition building is a vehicle for increasing influence. (national and regional)
- Strengthening information access and electronic communication on the processes(informing other CSOs on SDGs9
- Establish an ongoing dialogue between the policy makers and community groups
- Expand spaces and opportunities for active engagement on key issues.
- Capacity building of CSOs to actively participate in global spaces
- Resource mobilization to support the process.
- Strengthening the capacity of state to respond (mechanisms to implement policies and strategies



Conclusion

- Need for concerted efforts to represent the voices of the community (CSOs and the State)
- This therefore calls for an increased focus in strengthening civil society in the South FOR engagement and participation in the processes which will define the post-2015 global development agenda





 **Community Working Group**
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THANK YOU, SIYABONGA, MERCI

