The Anglophone Africa Civil Society and Communities CCM Shadow Report and Scorecard Initiative

THE GHANA CIVIL SOCIETY AND COMMUNITIES CCM SHADOW REPORT

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Every one of the Country Reports were done using Participatory Action Research: The research was developed, conducted, analysed and written by in-country national civil society activists.
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Abbreviations

AAI  AIDS Accountability International
CCM  Country Co-ordinating Mechanism
CoI/CI  Conflict of Interest
CG  Community group
CSO  Civil Society Organisation
CS  Civil Society
EANNASO  Eastern Africa National Networks of AIDS Service Organisations
EPA  Eligibility Performance Assessment
FBO  Faith-Based Organisation
FGD  Focus Group Discussion
WSW  Women who have Sex with Women
GF/GFATM  Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
HIV  Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDU  Injecting drug users
INGO  International Non-Governmental Organisation
KAP  Key Affected Populations
KP  Key Populations
MDR TB  Multi-Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis
MSM  Men who have sex with men
NFM  New funding model
NCM  National Coordinating Mechanism
NGO  Non-Governmental Organisation
NPO  Non-Profit Organisation
OIG  Office of the Inspector-General
PAM  People Affected by Malaria
PATB  People Affected by Tuberculosis
PIP  Performance Improvement Plan
PLWDD  People Living with the Diseases of HIV, TB and malaria
PLWHIV  People Living with HIV
PR  Primary Recipient
RFA  Request for Application
SR  Subsidiary Recipient
SSR  Sub-Subsidiary Recipient
SW  Sex Workers
TB  Tuberculosis
Effective Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs) are a vital part of the Global Fund architecture at country level. CCMs are responsible for submitting requests for funding and for providing oversight during implementation. With the introduction of the Global Fund’s New Funding Model (NFM) in March 2014, CCMs play an even more important central role, convene stakeholders to engage meaningfully in inclusive country dialogue, agree on funding split, and participate in the development of National Strategic Plan (NSP) discussions for the three diseases at country level.

With the enhanced responsibility, the NFM also introduced more rigorous CCM assessment processes. Previously, CCMs submitted a self-assessment attached to their proposal. Now, CCM self-assessments are facilitated by conducted by an external consultant – either the International HIV/AIDS Alliance or Grant Management Solutions for and on behalf of the CCM Hub. Further, CCMs are also mandated to have a performance improvement plan to accompany their assessment, ensuring that areas of weakness are addressed in an open and transparent manner.

Despite the importance of CCMs in Global Fund decision-making at country level, studies have flagged issues with CCM membership balance, poor representation and limited constituency feedback. Further, the recent audit report from the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) found several persistent shortcomings with CCM performance:

- 10% of the 50 countries reviewed did not have the required oversight committee;
- More than half of the countries did not have specific information on roles, timelines, and budgets in their oversight plans, or they had oversight plans that were outdated;
- 62% of the CCMs were non-compliant with the requirement of seeking feedback from non CCM members and from people living with and/or affected with the disease;
- More than half of the 45 CCMs that have oversight bodies did not adequately discuss challenges with the PRs to identify problems and explore solutions;
- 58% of the CCMs had not shared oversight reports with country stakeholders and the Global Fund Secretariat in the previous six months; and
- 26% did not share the oversight reports with relevant stakeholders in a timely manner that could have ensured well-timed remedial action.

In light of the OIG CCM Audit, and the enhanced role of CCMs in country level disease governance in the Funding Model, there is a need for a wide range of stakeholders to be empowered to demand improved CCM performance. While the move to have an external consultant to facilitate the CCM Eligibility & Performance Assessments (EPA) and the development of Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) to guide the subsequent strengthening of the CCM is an improvement, the fact that these EPAs and PIPs are not public is an obstacle to accountability.

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Problem Statement

Vested stakeholders and communities must be able to use CCM assessments and improvement plans as accountability mechanisms to demand better performance.

Added to this is the fact that currently CCM Assessment & Performance Improvement Plans lack questions that speak to quality of performance such as meaningful engagement, use of documentation and information, etc.

Civil society needs to be further engaged with the CCM Assessment & Performance Improvement Plans in order to hold stakeholders accountable. Similarly, these same civil society watchdogs and affected communities must have the tools, knowledge and information they need to be able to measure the performance of the CCM members that represent them and to hold CCMs accountable.
About the research

The project comprises of two types of research:

*The Country CCM Shadow Reports*
These reports drill down into issues at country level and assess CCM performance from the perspectives of both CCM members as well as the perspective of other stakeholders such as principal recipients and sub recipients. The report is based on the GFATM CCM Audit Progress Assessment Tool but also include various other questions that are seen to be lacking in the existing audits by Geneva. The reason why the research is considered a shadow reporting exercise is that methodologically and in terms of content we are hoping to build and improve on the methods being used by Geneva at this time. Shadow reports are used to supplement and/or provide alternative information to that which was submitted in the original reports. In this work, our aim is the same: to supplement and/or provide alternative information to that found in the original CCM audits.

The Civil Society CCM Scorecard and Country CCM Shadow Reports will not duplicate the Global Fund supported Eligibility and Performance Assessments (EPAs). This is because whilst EPAs are consultant facilitated self-assessments of CCMs that are largely driven by the Global Fund to facilitate accountability using a top down approach; the Civil Society CCM Scorecard and Country CCM Shadow Reports will be undertaken by civil society in country, using a bottom up approach. In addition, the Civil Society CCM Scorecard and Country CCM Shadow Reports sought to interview both CCM members as well as implementing partners (principal recipients (PRs) and sub-recipients (SRs)) who interact with CCMs. The research for the Civil Society Scorecard and the Country CCM Shadow Reports was facilitated by civil society resident in country so the exercise could both empower civil society and sustain the culture of demanding accountability from CCMs in country and be replicated across other grant implementers.

*The Civil Society CCM Scorecard*
A comparative analysis that ranks the participating countries against each other in terms of their performance. Using the AAI Scorecard methodology, data from the Country CCM Shadow Reports is analyzed and countries are graded on their performance, as a means to uncover best and worst practice, who is ahead, who is falling behind, and other similarities and differences that might make for good entry points for advocacy.

*Focus Countries*
Nine countries participated in the research: Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

*Expected Outcomes*

- **Long term goal**
  More accountable CCMs.

- **Medium term objective**
  Increased transparency around CCM performance and improvement plans.

- **Short term aim**
  Empowered civil society and community groups who can do effective shadow reporting.
Methodology

The technical team (AAI and EANNASO) developed a questionnaire based on the Global Fund Eligibility and Performance Assessments (EPAs) questionnaire (called the Progress Assessment Tool). AAI almost exclusively uses Participatory Action research (PAR) for field research, a best practice in which community and country civil society partners co-developed the methodology, research tools, conducted the research and wrote the final reports and analysis.

Local civil society, who do not sit on the CCM and do not receive Global Fund money, were identified to do conduct the research at country level, including data collection and analysis. We selected 3 local watchdogs in each of the 9 countries for a total of 27 local watch dogs to be trained, mentored and supported to do the research. The training also equipped civil society with skills to enable them to engage with the CCM Secretariat to plan and schedule the interviews and FGDs. Civil society conducted interviews to collect data using a mix of questionnaire interviews and focused group discussions (FGD). Comprehensive questionnaires with open ended questions and FGD guides were provided to civil society; these allowed for probing and discussions whilst collecting data.

First, the core group of respondents from the CCM for the interview and focus group discussions were drawn from a cross section of CCM members representing the respective governments, faith based, civil society, private sector, key populations, people affected by the diseases, the bi lateral and multi-lateral partners and the CCM secretariat. Civil society conducting the research were expected to undertake a minimum of eight face to face interviews and conduct one focus group discussion of not less than six CCM members.

These interviews and a FGD collectively included all of the following sectors: government, faith based, civil society, private sector, key populations, people affected by the diseases, the bi lateral and multi-lateral partners and the CCM secretariat.

Secondly, civil society also conducted a FGD of 10-12 non CCM members mainly drawn from implementing government and civil society PRs and SRs. The second FGD enabled the research to get the perspectives of non CCM members who have interacted with the CCM. Key areas of discussion included:

- How they have benefitted from the oversight function of the CCM;
- How, when and the outcomes of the oversight field visit;
- If the oversight reports and outcomes are formally shared and published through the CCM website;
- Whether women and KPs are adequately represented on the CCM;
- If civil society members were elected/selected in an open and transparent manner;
- An understanding of the level of meaningful participation of KPs in CCM leadership;
- An understanding of the level of meaningful participation of KPs informal and ad hoc committees;
- The methods of soliciting KP input and then this feedback to the larger constituency;
- Conflict of Interest (COI) e.g. how grant implementers (SRs) who are also CCM members manage COI in CCM meetings etc.
One aim was to build the capacity of the local civil society watchdogs to engage with a variety of different research techniques and data gathering modalities, so the following will contribute to this objective:

- Civil society received training on FGDs at the workshop;
- Civil society completed hard copies of the questionnaires at country level and then also captured the data online into a survey monkey.
- Civil society developed their own 2-3 page analysis of each of the 2 FGDs, talking about key findings (estimate 5-8 findings) and recommending strategic entry points for advocacy (estimate 3-5)
- In addition to this, civil society wrote their own 5-8 page analysis of all of the data as they understood and interpreted it and submitted this to the technical team. This analysis formed the basis of all of the research they conducted, and informed the technical team’s analysis of the data.

Sub-grants were made to each of the local watchdogs to support their implementation of the shadow reporting. The content from the country data collectors, once entered into the survey monkey tool, was analysed by AAI, presented to EANNASO and country teams at a meeting in Kigali, Rwanda in February 2017, and feedback from this meeting and from email correspondence from country teams was included to develop the final reports.

Methodologically it is important to note the dates of when the shadow EPAs and the Geneva EPAs were conducted as differences could be a result of changes over time. All the shadow EPA research was conducted between November 2016 and February 2017. Ghana’s Geneva EPAs were submitted on the 2017-01-11.
Analysis

CCM Performance

All CCMs are required to meet the following six requirements to be eligible for Global Fund financing:

1. A transparent and inclusive concept note development process;
2. An open and transparent Principal Recipient selection process;
3. Oversight planning and implementation;
4. Membership of affected communities on the CCM;
5. Processes for non-government CCM member selection; and
6. Management of conflict of interest on CCMs.

Below is a highlight of the research findings as per the above eligibility requirements:

1. A transparent and inclusive concept note development process

The transparency and inclusiveness of the concept note development with the CCM Ghana had quite a mixed reaction from both non-CCM members and from CCM members. The responses show that the concept note development is consultant-driven and the selection of members to the concept note development committee is highly guided by the technical competence of representatives.

Little emphasis is placed on experiential input, thus the low engagement of KAPs who are mostly not involved in the draft stage as a result of the low technical capacity of KAP representatives on the board and groups such as MSM and FSW who are excluded even from the CCM based on the legalities of their existence as a group. However, the drafts are discussed and voted on by the entire CCM. CSOs raised concerns about the low engagement of CSOs in the drafting stage with the result that their concerns are mostly ignored. The most challenging aspect is the validation of budget which mostly comes very late into the concept submission period, offering CSOs little time to properly discuss concept notes and budget. Below are highlights of some views shared by non-CCM members and CCM members.

Non-CCM Members

“The mandate of CCM is clear but they have not performed well because they use consultants to develop their concept with little consultation of the CSOs. When it comes to budgeting, CSOs are completely taken off”.

CCM members

“I will Give 7/10 because I see people who come to speak for people. For example, commercial sex workers are not represented by SWs”
“MSM is not represented by themselves but by WAPCAS [West Africa Project to Combat HIV/AIDS]”.

“The MSMs and SW are not represented because they are not organised and they are not legal”.

“CSOs lack opportunity to participate in budgetary preparation and priorities are not represented’.

2. An open and transparent Principal Recipient Selection process
Discussion of this issue largely commented on a highly transparent process devoid of conflict of interest in the selection of PRs by CCM Ghana. Members whose organisations are vying for PRs slots are mostly excluded from serving on the selection board and members of the selections board are mandated to declare any conflict of interest before any business of PRs are discussed or voted on.

According to the respondents, the policy guiding their selection is strictly observed so much so that sometimes to the detriment of most qualified organisations who by virtue of the conflict of interest policy cannot take up a particular PR role. Sometimes, by virtue of the position of a member on the CCM whose organisation qualifies for PR the member decides not to take up the bid of PR to avoid any speculative conflict of interest.

It is important to note in analysing this section, that Ghana has never had a CSO PR, and that the comments below apply specifically to sub-recipients who benefit from funding by virtue of being on the CCM. Some Non-CCM members however had different views on the openness of the PR selection process, indicating CCM-member led organisations always have the lion’s share. Here are some views captured as presented by respondents:

Non-CCM Members

“There are representatives in CCM whose organisations are implementing Global Fund projects. The representatives in CCM’s organisations have had a good growth at astonishing rate”.

“When Dr X used to be a member of the oversight committee on malaria, she use to get projects”.

“Mr X refused a cheque from TB for his organisation because he was then the chairman of CCM”.

CCM members

“There is a form that members sign to declare their conflict of interest and they would be evaluated further to ensure their inclusion for the conflict of interest issues”.

“There is the over use of the COI “monster” in keeping people out of decision making”
### Analysis

#### 3. Oversight planning and implementation

The oversight planning and implementation are guided by Global Fund guidelines. Guidance is usually given to CSOs on the selection procedures. CCM Ghana since 2015 reduced its membership from 74 to 25 members with two main oversight committees (Malaria, TB & HIV committees). The membership is composed of CSOs, faith-based organisations, the business community, government and academia.

**Question: Oversight: How would you rate the performance of the oversight body?**

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Only people living affected by the diseases are currently represented, these are PLHIVs and a representative from the TB affected community. The Key and Affected Populations (KAPs) namely MSMs and FSWs are represented by CSOs who implement KP programs and who also advocate on their behalf. The selection process for oversight memberships is generally described as transparent and their activities are rated as of good quality. The oversight group generally monitors PR and SR activities through their quarterly reports and field visits.
An innovation for the oversight implementation process is the introduction of the dashboard which provides timely reporting and accountability of the activities of the PRs concerning the fund usage, implementation milestones and challenges. The various responses points to the active involvement of CSOs on the oversight planning and implementation. However, the non-CCM group acknowledges the disadvantage of fragmented interests of CSOs in engaging the CCM. A few of the views shared are as follows:

**Non-CCM Members**

“The representation of CSOs at CCM is very important; however, CSOs have not been proactive in engaging the CCM. The CSOs are not forceful in such. Their voice is much needed in CCM’s engagement”.

“CSOs are very fragmented in their representation on CCM; they usually hold individualised interests in the representation rather than the collective interest”.

**CCM members**

“The CCM Ghana membership was modelled on the structure, guidelines and directives from Global Fund”.

“CCM Ghana has 25 members from CSOs, government, faith-based, business, academia etc.”.

“Yes, the CCM Ghana has two oversight committees set up (Malaria Oversight Committee and TB/HIV/AIDS Oversight Committee)”.

“Yes, the CCM is in my personal view doing its best in this regard. Right from the Concept Notes development and grant negotiations”
“KPs are adequately represented.”

“Through its oversight committees the CCM is able to monitor the activities of PR and sub-grantees”.

4. Membership of affected communities on the CCM

The CCM Ghana membership for affected communities covers PLWHIV and TB. However, KPs such as MSM, FSW, the adolescent and youth groups although recognised by the CCM, they are represented by interest groups such as WAPCAS and other proxy organizations. This is because the CCM holds the view that, groups such as MSM, FSWs are not legally recognised groups and thus cannot be admitted to the CCM following the constitution of the CCM and the legalities involved in engaging such a group. The other view that affects their inclusion is their low technical capacity of representatives from the KAPs. Many are of the view that CCM activities are quite technical and require persons of appreciable technical capacities. This they find less in affected communities, thus leading to the belief that the interest organisations are better placed to represent them. A few of the views gathered were as follows:

“NAP+ (i.e. the National Association of persons Living with HIV) the lacks capacity to fully engage in CCM meetings”.

“Weak CSOs participation, lack of coordination between CSOs”.

“MSM and FSW are represented by West Africa Project to Combat HIV/AIDS (WAPCAS) because MSM do not operate as a legal entity and so advocacy groups represent them”.

5. Processes for non-government CCM member selection

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CSO Quality: What is the quality of civil society sector representation?

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- Unacceptable quality
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- I don’t know
The processes for non-government CCM members are defined in the governance manual. Non-government CCM members are made up of KAPs, CSOs, People Living with diseases (PLWD) and the private sector. The CSO constituencies seem more organised and have transparent, free and fair elections to select their representatives on the CCM.

In the case of the private sector, one cannot tell how the representative was selected and how many private sector entities have knowledge of who represents them on the CCM. In the case of the KAPs their representation is by proxy advocacy organisations who represent them. It is also not clear how the proxy organisation is selected. In the case of the faith-based organisations, the selection is by consensus building and it is rotational. (Currently it’s the Christian Council that represents them, in the next CCM it may be the Islamic Council).

6. Management of conflict of interest on CCMs

The CCM in Ghana has a conflict of interest policy that guides work. In all situations or sessions of the CCM, members are asked to declare their conflict of interest, even in the selection of members for the oversight committees.

Question: Are there any conflicts of interest in the CCM?

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EPA Tool & Process

In the original Geneva Eligibility and Performance Assessment process, the views of non-CCM members were not sought in the tool and process. The original process was a self-assessment and also dwelt basically on face-to-face
interviews with the CCM secretariat and leadership without the views of non CCM members. The tool, beyond finding out whether the policy exists, does not probe whether they were practically being implemented or the status of its implementation, and if they facilitated the desired change in the strengthening of the CCMs.

**PIP Tool and Process**

The PIP is a useful tool for monitoring the implementation of plans. It ensures the documentation of the plans that guide the CCM processes ranging from oversight, membership, structures, conflict of interest, engagement, to communication. It also provides the opportunity for verifying the activities and assessing the gaps that need to be addressed.

The major deficit is it is a tool that could best monitor the situation only at the secretarial level since it requires clear filling of documentations of existing plans. Except for the communication plan of which there is a follow-up on its implementation, none of the other items provide means for verifying its implementation. The tool is very easy to use, provided the responding officers have the needed documentation of plans.

**Analysis**

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Findings

Finding 1: CCM members ignorant of EPA and PIP process
Both members and non-members of the CCM have very little knowledge of the EPA tool since assessment usually is done by consultants with the secretariat. There is a major gap for CCM members knowing and understanding the assessment processes. Many indicated they do not know or haven't seen any such assessments as the consultants' only deal with the secretariat.

Finding 2: Need to engage people affected and not just technical experts
There is concern for the engagement of technically sound representatives on the membership of the CCM and not just the swelling of membership based on the guiding principles on engagement. The CCM sees their work to be very technical and therefore rather sees it as important to engage much more technically qualified members rather than engaging people just because they have a lived experience. One challenging issue that this concern creates is the consideration for the representation of MSMs and FSWs who are always represented by interest NGOs. The CCM currently does not deal with such groups although they have provided training for such constituencies through their interest NGOs. This they discuss as a problem of their legal representation as groups in Ghana. Groups such as FSWs and MSMs are not legally permitted in the country and the CCM considers this as a major challenge as their engagement may be interpreted as a breach of the law.

Finding 3: Grant proposal and implementation process flawed
The funding processes does not favour the non-governmental PR groups since a major portion of the funding goes to the government sector who most of the time have a low burn-out rate of the funds. The CSOs do a lot of work in sensitisation, advocacy and constituency engagement which most times is not supported by the funds. The current process of consultants’ engagements for the concept note development gives little opportunity for the engagement of CSOs and KAPs in its development process. This provides little opportunity for the inclusion of their concerns for funding.
Recommendations

Priority Area 1: Training required on CCMs, EPAS and PIPs
Training on assessment tools and its importance to the activities of the CCM and the fund. The training must involve CCM members and Non-CCM CSOs who are advocates in the three priority diseases. The knowledge and understanding of the CCM activities, the fund access and the importance of the assessment would better strengthen country watch activities and further contribute to efficient and timely use of resources. This training could be organised by EANNASO in collaboration with the country teams.

Priority Area 2: Greater involvement of CSOs in CCM spaces
Civil society watchdogs require funding and capacity building to engage much more with the CCM as observers at CCM meetings. It would equally be useful for country teams to be resourced to monitor and participate in constituency engagements and report on their activities and how they can influence decisions taken at the CCM. One immediate opportunity is to share the results of the CCM Shadow Report study. It’s important that the results of this survey are shared with CCM members and all who participated in the survey at a round table, so that collectively they can identify areas of strengthening for the effective functioning of the CCM.

Priority Area 3: Need for CSO watchdogs, especially KP CSOs, on fund implementation
There is a need to support in-country CSOs and Community Groups to develop tools in monitoring the PR and SR activities, most especially the KAPs’ constituencies to follow-up the fund utilisation processes.

Contact Details

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