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

THE SWAZILAND 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

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>AAI</td>
<td>AIDS Accountability International</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCM</td>
<td>Country Co-ordinating Mechanism</td>
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<td>Col/CI</td>
<td>Conflict of Interest</td>
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<td>CG</td>
<td>Community group</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisation</td>
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<td>CS</td>
<td>Civil Society</td>
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<td>EANNASO</td>
<td>Eastern Africa National Networks of AIDS Service Organisations</td>
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<td>EPA</td>
<td>Eligibility Performance Assessment</td>
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<td>FBO</td>
<td>Faith-Based Organisation</td>
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<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussion</td>
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<td>WSW</td>
<td>Women who have Sex with Women</td>
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<td>GF/GFATM</td>
<td>Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria</td>
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<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<td>IDU</td>
<td>Injecting drug users</td>
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<td>INGO</td>
<td>International Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>KAP</td>
<td>Key Affected Populations</td>
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<td>MDR TB</td>
<td>Multi-Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis</td>
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<td>MSM</td>
<td>Men who have sex with men</td>
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<td>NFM</td>
<td>New funding model</td>
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<td>Non-Profit Organisation</td>
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<td>Office of the Inspector-General</td>
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<td>People Affected by Malaria</td>
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<td>People Affected by Tuberculosis</td>
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<td>PIP</td>
<td>Performance Improvement Plan</td>
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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.1,2 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.

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 that 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 EANASO) 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. Swaziland’s Geneva EPAs were submitted on the 2016-09-13.
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

Non-CCM members felt that the concept note development process is inclusive only for getting ideas from them. However, they did not know what the process was thereafter. They are called to one meeting for the purpose on consulting for concept note development and they registered their dissatisfaction and decried that they were not fully engaged about the specific needs of constituents to be included in the concept note.

Also, CCM members registered similar concerns about the concept note development process, that it is short and therefore rushed, making it an inadequate process to garner inputs from constituents.

They pointed out that CCM representatives must engage with their constituents on a constant / regular basis and not only during concept note development. Lack of a budget from CCM to facilitate consultations was another cause for concern that was reported.

“There are no consultations due to lack of budget to conduct them. And this causes a big problem in response as issues don’t appear in concept note yet ideas are taken sometimes from representatives. This leads to lack of harmonization in activities as you find UN agencies doing the same activities so anything else becomes duplication.”

“There should be bottom - top approach whereby the concept note is developed according to the needs of the affected people and not otherwise. Youth centres and traditional gogo centre structures must be used for consultancy at community level. Facilitation of local programs tailor made for locals and not just ideas taken from other countries.”
2. An open and transparent Principal Recipient selection process

Respondents were not entirely happy with the PR selection process and felt it was inappropriate to have the NAC as the PR, which was long established since the beginning of the CCM. A second PR from civil society only started in the current CCM term, but even then it was a tedious process that required solidarity from CS members.

On the overall, non-CCM members felt that choosing of the PR is not done in an open and transparent selection process. This could be attributed to the fact that most people are not aware of the specific processes of choosing a PR and how an organisation qualifies or does not qualify for selection. There was much discontent reported especially regarding the selection of SRs, noting that it was unanimously done outside of CCM members, as all of them questioned what the qualification criteria was, since selected SRs were relatively new and smaller NGOs with limited capacity. There was a feeling that the panel that selects the SRs especially was not objective. A bone of contention was that the CCM Chair is a sub-recipient.

The first PR is also a CCM member and it was felt that some decisions are made behind closed doors; an example cited was that the GF country mission liaises directly with the PR without involving CCM members; members only get debriefings on the mission. Consequently, most respondents except one interviewed CCM member, felt the PR is okay as chair. Most of the non-CCM members were so ignorant of CCM procedures that they did not even know which organisations were the PRs.

3. Oversight planning and implementation

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

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- Totally unacceptable quality
- Unacceptable quality
- Acceptable quality
- Good quality
- Perfect quality
- I don’t know
Analysis

Non-CCM members were clueless in most cases about CCM business hence there was no idea of an Oversight Committee, its membership or plan in existence. Neither did they know what the annual working plans of the CCM were or who was responsible for implementing oversight activities.

CCM members felt the committee made an effort to carry out their mandate and implement their plan, albeit in a haphazard fashion. Members felt an area of improvement was limited involvement especially when the committee plan involved activities of member organisations. They felt they were not given an opportunity to influence how the work plans could be integrated into their own organisational plans.

“No, they do not fulfil their mandate otherwise as stakeholders we would know about what the oversight does. There is no inclusiveness whatsoever. There are no engagements before or after grant application process.”

“I have never heard of any CCM oversight plan before this interview. (Non-CCM member)

“Yes. I have been involved in 22 oversight visits on drug consignments and Health Centers assessments. However the oversights are not inclusive of the people on the ground who are living with TB. Meetings are only held with CCM representatives but I am not happy with the implementation as we are not consulted on TB specific programming.”

4. Membership of affected communities on the CCM:

The CCM membership constitutes all the representatives articulated by GF guidelines. However, there was a feeling among non-CCM members that the representation of KAPs and IDUs is inadequate. The representatives are either unknown by the community organisations or not consulted on issues affecting them. There is no feedback process from the representatives.
A lack of capacity for representatives coming from the two constituencies (KAP and PLWD) was reported as a huge concern by both CCM and non-CCM members as they were often not people that were technically sound. This caused a power imbalance on the table as their views were thwarted by the big guns.

Other respondents reported disapproval at having donors sit on the CCM because they had a tendency to steer discussions towards their interests and influenced a lot of decisions, in comparison to the less capacitated KAP or PLWD representatives. All respondents appreciated the fact that this was a huge challenge and not easy to resolve but nonetheless a reality.

There was an imbroglio over whether CCM representation should be based on membership head-count or on the presence of relevant people that are skilled to represent a constituency, it was felt mere membership does not translate into quality representation from representatives.

When asked if the CCM allows observers: “We have it in the by-laws but it is not practised. People are not allowed to even know what the CCM is.”

“They last informed us four years ago. They only show interest in inviting us for meetings during concept note development.”

“PLWDs representative has good understanding of CCM and community issues. But lack contact with grassroot level for feedback. (Can be solved) by getting representatives from grassroot community level who are in constant contact with communities.”
5. Processes for non-government CCM member selection

All respondents said that the selection process does not seem to be clear to both CCM and non-CCM members at all. CS felt they are not given an opportunity to plan properly before attending these elections so they could meet beforehand and prepare their selection through a consensus-building process.

Coordination of these meetings could be improved, as there were communication breakdowns or a lack of understanding: some NGOs would attend meetings not aware that the purpose was for electing representatives only to find the elections occur abruptly at the end. Only NGO’s affiliated with the Coordination Assembly of NGOs (CANGO) are invited to these elections, and they exclude CBOs.

"The CCM engages in a transparent process which requires members of the constituencies to meet and select their representatives. The documentation on the proceedings of these selection processes are usually shared with the CCM for approval and the Global Fund Secretariat for compliance monitoring."

“(It was) Not transparent. No proper communication about the process. Unfair representation of KPs.”

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

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6. Management of conflict of interest on CCMs

Glarings conflicts of interest amongst CCM members was noted. In fact, members’ sentiments were that all members are conflicted in one way or another because they have an interest in CCM business. Members are asked to declare COI before meetings start and even though some do declare there is no specific action taken to minimise their conflict as they continue to sit in and participate in meetings though they are clearly conflicted. A gap was noted in that the definition of COI needs to be clearly defined in terms of what constitutes conflict of interest within the CCM, beyond the general definition. One suggestion was to amend the by-laws to articulate this.

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

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EPA Tool & Process

The EPA is a necessary and valuable process for the CCM to do as it helps the CCM to evaluate their compliance and readiness to submit quality concept notes. It is also useful as it is a subjective process that uses CCM members to be change-agents as they self-evaluate, and hence buy-in is easier as is securing commitment to improve weak areas.

However, the process of the CCM itself requesting an EPA from their own technical assistant diminishes the transparency and accountability of this process. Self-assessments have the risk of the CCM praising itself without proper investigation and interrogation. Therefore, this shadow report exercise brings complementarity in this regard. The EPA tools are sufficient; however it seems useful to restrict the shadow report to CS or non-CCM members in order to carve out whether CCM business is widely known and whether the CCM endeavours to involve them in their process.
Interviewing CS representative that sit on the CCM for the shadow report's purpose contaminates the data. Therefore, a recommendation is that the EPA process should be limited to CCM members too. Also, the processes have to be independent and occur simultaneously if possible so that reference points and timing gel together.

Lastly, the tools for the two processes (EPA and shadow report) have to be different, since their objectives are different hence there is no need for the CCM shadow report to use the EPA. The analysis of the EPA findings is limiting in the Excel spreadsheet as it may leave out many other pertinent findings related to the six requirements. There should be a narrative accompanying the Excel to capture findings not catered for in the Excel sheet.

**PIP Tool and Process**

If the two processes are distinct, then the outputs will be different. The shadow report too must have an improvement plan in order to mitigate issues discovered during the exercise and provide an opportunity to resolve challenges and concerns. There must be continuity, rather than document issues without a plan to improve issues raised, lest CS feel their inputs do not influence and shape CCM work.
Findings

Finding 1: Meaningful engagement of CS weak
Stakeholders outside of the CCM did not know of CCM business, its scope of functions nor the Global Fund grant process and execution. Some CS partners don't know who their representatives are and communication between the CCM and CS was almost non-existent. Consequently, undertones of distrust of the CCM Secretariat were picked up. It was noted that consultation with CS in the GF framework is cosmetic, only serving the purpose of fulfilling GF mandatory process i.e. concept note development, election of CCM representatives by constituents, etc.

CS should be an integral part of the process beyond these milestones to include routine engagement, especially for representatives to engage with constituents. This is necessitated by the fact that the NFM makes CS involvement a prerequisite, so this must be demonstrated by committed funding to support activities to strengthen CS.

This means making available funding for representatives to have fora to engage with their constituents to update / give feedback to them on decisions taken at the CCM, to have adequate time to prepare inputs into the concept note development, and demand accountability for commitments made by the CCM, and to check programmatic progress amongst each other, rather than funding the mandatory processes alluded to earlier.
Moreover, both CCM members and non-members, reported concerns about poor orientation of the CCM representatives after selection into the CCM. This was mostly applicable to members coming from non-technical representatives such as PLWD and KAP. On another note, the capacity of the CCM Secretariat is limited and improving secretariat capacity in terms of staff and expertise to engage stakeholders should be prioritised.

**Finding 2: Management of Conflicts of Interest**

The exercise uncovered widespread misunderstanding amongst CCM members of what constituted conflicts of interest and how to manage them. All acknowledged that everybody in the CCM had an interest as decisions taken oftentimes affected members’ affiliation or organisation, so each would support a decision that would give them leverage. This was mostly so for bilateral organisations that have more power to steer discussions that are hard to disregard as they are donors that bring funding for the country. Consequently, it was reported that the by-laws of the CCM would be revised, including developing or amending the definition of COI and how to manage a situation where conflict of interest is noted, beyond merely declaring COI then continuing to sit in the discussions and contribute. Also, it was strongly felt that PRs and SRs must not be part of the CCM, though this is yet to be interrogated by the CCM.

**Finding 3: PR reporting; programmatic reporting too; not just burn rates**

CCM members felt that PR reporting was overly skewed towards burn rates, rather than towards obliging PRs to provide reports on programmatic progress and on the impact of interventions supported through GF. This needs to change as a matter of urgency.
Recommendations

Priority Area 1: Capacity building of new CCM members
There should two separate inductions for new CCM members: the standard one regarding the CCM mandate and expectations; while the other one should be constituency-specific, to hone advocacy skills and effective negotiation skills and ways to elicit inputs from constituents, demands from the CCM, etc.

Priority Area 2: Greater involvement of CS in CCM affairs
The CCM needs to reach out to its stakeholders about the mandate of the CCM, its roles and functions, and those of the Secretariat. The CCM should be in the public domain and not a protected enterprise, as should be the timing of different CCM processes and grant fund application calendar. Additionally, CS must have space to sit in on CCM meetings if needed for specific areas that are of interest to them to appreciate issues being discussed, and make inputs. Alternatively, the CCM Secretariat should organise meetings with CS to provide them with an opportunity to make submissions and influence decisions.

Priority Area 3: Marginal participation of key stakeholders
CCM members elucidated that some key members were not attending CCM meetings to satisfaction, notably the Ministry of Health. There was a feeling of concern about the limited participation of members so an incentive is required to resolve the laxity.

Priority Area 4: GF Country Team work process needs rectifying
The GF country team needs to work very closely with the CCM rather than to deal directly with PRs. The CCM felt the current arrangement is undesirable because CCM members are not part of the country team mission in-country. The CCM is only invited at the end of the mission for a debrief, yet some members of the CCM can be part of the discussions so that they are aware of the information exchange rather than get filtered details in a debrief.

Dealing with the PRs directly alienates the CCM and is not good for demanding accountability from PRs, more so in Swaziland because the PR has been one for a long time and makes the CCM less privy than the involvement of GF with PR. It is recommended that as fair practice, selected members of the CCM participate in the in-country mission.
Notes
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