

Engaging with civil society: Ghana's experience

IHP+ meeting

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Government and Civil Society

- General Government Policy is to involve Civil Society in its activities
- The MOH has Private sector unit located in the Policy, Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Directorate under which Civil Society is engaged.
- To the question can we engage,Yes we can ... with civil society

Policy dialogue

- Coalition of NGOs in Health is engaged in:
 - Monthly MOH-Partners meetings
 - Planning of twice yearly Health Summits
 - Annual review process of the health sector
 - Specific issues – eg health financing, family planning, advocacy
 - Christian Health Association of Ghana (CHAG)
 - covers mostly the rural population at least 35% of pop
 - Was instrumental in starting the health insurance drive in Ghana

Planning and recent JANS

- Participation at regular meetings where updates are given
- Consultative meetings in Ghana's northern and southern zones in developing SMTDP
- Inclusion on local support team for JANS process
- Inclusion of civil society rep on external JANS team

Is it worth it? ..Yes

- Civil society provides a different perspective
 - Often closer to the users
- Can be better placed to reach under-served areas
 - Role in extending service delivery to esp vulnerable and deprived
 - Potential allies in key Behav. Ch. Comm. messages
 - Pressure group for esp the voiceless
 - Whistle blowers

Challenges and potential solutions

- Disparate and geographically scattered but coalitions, alliances help
- Limited voice in face of strong government
- Financially vulnerable, therefore require financial support.