



Advancing CSO Advocacy for Health Financing Consolidating Progress and Shaping the Future of support for CSO Engagement

26th – 28th March 2024

Venue: Radisson Blu Hotel Nairobi

Meeting Report

PRINCIPLE TAKEAWAYS

Advancing CSO Advocacy for Health Financing Consolidating Progress and Shaping the Future of support for CSO Engagement

African nations need to cope with complex public health challenges that stem from a variety of sources

such as epidemics, extreme weather effects, humanitarian crises and other acute health emergencies calling for a paradigm shift in the way nations resource and address these health challenges. Civil Society Or-



ganizations (CSOs) have been key players in pushing for more money for healthcare in Africa through their ability to influence policy, track progress, and suggest evidence-based ways to improve health.

Bringing together the national trainers trained on health financing advocacy and UHC as part of the Joint Learning Agenda (JLA) programme from 20 countries ¹, the two-day workshop provided a platform for trained trainers and technical and financial partners to discuss, deliberate, and share experiences.

The workshop focused on four key objectives:

1. Evaluating JLA's impact: Assess successes and challenges of the JLA program in empowering CSO advocacy for health financing.
2. Strengthening advocacy: Share best practices through analyzing successful campaigns and resource mobilization approaches.
3. Shaping JLA's future: Explore the program's role in the evolving global landscape and identify funding opportunities.
4. Mobilizing stakeholder commitment: Secure support for the JLA's next phase through technical expertise and advocacy efforts.



¹ 10 Anglophone and 10 Francophone African countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Chad, Benin, Togo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Uganda

Objective 1: Harvest JLA Successes and Challenges



ROSEMARY MBURU

Director, WACI Health

■ Key Takeaway:

The JLA supported CSOs to play a critical role in national health financing advocacy, highlighting successes in data-driven advocacy, resource allocation, and social accountability.

■ Key Takeaway:

Challenges faced by CSOs include limited knowledge and understanding of all relevant facets of health financing, fragmented efforts, and funding limitations, indicating areas where the JLA program can offer further support.

Objective 2: Collaborate on DRM and Advocacy Strategies

■ Key Takeaway:

The JLA initiative has had a transformative impact in mobilizing CSOs towards a more active and influential role in health financing and policy advocacy, while also laying out a strategic path forward for sustainability and deeper impact in health financing advocacy.

■ Key Takeaway:

Key Takeaway: The strategic use of media and strong partnerships between elected leaders and CSOs play a crucial role in amplifying the advocacy messages and promoting a collaborative environment conducive to policy and budgetary changes



Cicely Thomas

GFF Health Financing Lead

Objective 3: Shape the JLA's Opportunities



Shu-Shu Tekle-Haimanot

Senior Manager, Advocacy, Health
Finance - The Global Fund

Key Takeaway:

CSO involvement brings new resources to health financing. CSOs should leverage national and regional capacity on health financing expertise and opportunities existing within the JLA's community of practice platform to build their capacity in various areas of health financing advocacy work. The JLA's community of practice platform can be leveraged for capacity building in various advocacy areas.

Key Takeaway:

The future of health financing advocacy requires exploring partnerships with non-traditional donors and the private sector. This aligns with the JLA's need to identify potential funding opportunities

Objective 4: Mobilize Stakeholder Commitment

Key Takeaway:

Development partners' engagement is crucial for nurturing a collaborative and transparent environment in which they actively involve CSOs from the planning stages, support them in resource mobilization, and build their advocacy capacities to ensure effective and sustainable health financing efforts.

Key Takeaway:

CSOs should explore partnerships with the private sector to broaden the support base for health financing advocacy and engage citizens (especially youths)/community voices to amplify the importance of improved health financing.



Maria Patyna

Gavi Senior Manager, Strategic Partnerships
Immunisation Financing & Sustainability

DAY 1: DRAWING LESSONS FROM THE KEY SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES IN ADVOCATING FOR HEALTH FINANCING

The workshop brought together practitioners to discuss challenges and successes in health financing advocacy across Africa.



CHALLENGES

Fiscal deficits, debt distress, and low absorption rates hinder domestic financing.



CSO ROLE

Crucial for advocating for increased resources, holding governments accountable, and representing citizen voices.



JLA's impact on CSO advocacy:



Increased CSO engagement in policy shaping, evidence-based decision-making, and advocacy movements.



Notable achievements: Influencing national policy dialogues, budget analysis and advocacy leading to increased health budgets, and coalition building for UHC advocacy.



■ Key Lessons Learned:

1. Further strengthening CSO capabilities in health financing advocacy is essential; trends, best practices, tools, etc.
2. Collaborative efforts with development partners enhance visibility and impact.
3. Ongoing communication, information sharing, and technical assistance are crucial for effective advocacy.
4. Facilitating peer exchange among CSOs promotes learning and best practice sharing.

■ Success factors:

1. Building trust and consistency in advocacy efforts.
2. Political neutrality of CSOs.
3. Partnerships with parliamentarians, the private sector, the media and communities.
4. Subnational advocacy for increased budget allocation and enhanced service delivery.
5. Community understanding and participation in budget tracking and decision-making.

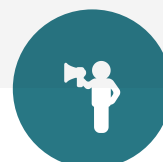
The sessions presentations and group work outcomes are available on the health financing community of practice platform; <https://healthfinancingcop.africa/>



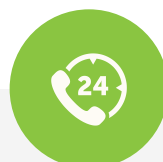
COLLABORATION ON DOMESTIC RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Through a marketplace exhibition this session explored different platforms and initiatives active in the health financing landscape:

Africa Leadership Meeting (ALM) High-Level National Health Financing Dialogues: This platform brings together stakeholders to accelerate progress towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC). Successful dialogues in Rwanda, Mozambique, and Burundi resulted in commitments for increased investment, health workforce development, and improved private sector engagement.



Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHAI): This initiative focuses on CSO-led advocacy for immunization and primary healthcare financing. Aims include increasing domestic resource mobilization, improving fund allocation, and tracking public expenditures.



Partners for Health (P4H): This global network promotes social health protection and health financing. P4H acts as a neutral facilitator, building frameworks for action at various levels to achieve sustainable and equitable health financing systems. CSOs can connect with P4H's country and regional focal person networks for collaboration and guidance.



Group Work:

Participants discussed key observations from the marketplace exhibition, focusing on improving:

- **Coordination among CSOs.**
- **Documentation and sharing of best practices.**

Recommendations on Better Coordination and Alignment

Establishing a mapping system for CSOs with similar advocacy agendas to prevent overlapping efforts and ensure clarity in objectives and timelines.

Stronger collaborations between CSOs, government entities and members of parliament to shift the perception of CSOs from adversaries to partners in health financing reform.

Recognize the importance of securing political support for the successful implementation of health financing policies and reforms.

Encourage CSOs to seek partnerships with organizations that align with their advocacy goals to enhance the collective impact of their efforts.

Recommendations on how to better track and document results

Continuous training for both new and existing CSOs on effective health financing advocacy, including technical aspects like monitoring and evaluation, policy development, and budgeting processes.

Build monitoring and evaluation activities into advocacy / accountability plans.

Prioritize the collection and dissemination of CSO achievements and lessons learned to motivate further advocacy efforts and demonstrate the feasibility of health financing reforms. newsletters, online platforms, and annual regional forums for CSOs to exchange experiences and strategies.

Make monitoring and evaluation tools widely available to CSOs to enhance the measurement of advocacy impacts.





DAY TWO: FUTURE OF CSO-LED HEALTH FINANCING

Day Two of the workshop focused on shaping the future of CSO-led health financing advocacy in Africa. Here's a summary of the outcomes of the group work and discussions:

Capacity Strengthening

- **Challenges:** Limited CSO capacity in understanding health financing models, lack of local expertise, and outdated training methods and tools.
- **Opportunities:** Build on existing JLA networks, leverage citizen budget initiatives, and prioritize advocacy-focused training, mentorship, and peer learning.

Collaboration & Networking

- **Challenges:** Fragmented global efforts, limited access to budget information at the national level and even less at sub-national level, and competition among CSOs for limited funding.
- **Opportunities:** Align funding mechanisms with broader health programs, engage with parliamentary committees, and utilize existing platforms like the Community of Practice for collaboration and information sharing.

Technical Assistance

- **Challenges:** Lack of awareness about available technical assistance and difficulty accessing it.
- **Opportunities:** Utilize the JLA community of practice platform to centralize technical resources, conduct self-organizational capacity assessments to identify capacity needs.

Tools & Platforms

- **Challenges:** Limited availability of user-friendly advocacy tools and difficulty accessing data.
- **Opportunities:** Develop and share simplified, evidence-based advocacy tools, collaborate with research institutions, and leverage the JLA platform for resource sharing.



Mobilizing Stakeholder Commitments

CSO Advocacy for Increased Health Funding and Improved Health Outcomes

- Health financing training and capacity building to local CSO partners.
- Monitoring and transparency efforts to track health spending.
- Monitoring service delivery to ensure provider accountability.
- Strengthening grassroots and community engagement to generate demand for increased health financing and improved health services.
- Data utilization and sharing to inform health priorities and advocacy efforts.
- Partnerships with the private sector, parliamentarians, and media to broaden advocacy support and resources.



Development Partner Support for enhanced CSO engagement in Health Financing:

- Improved financial and strategic support: Provide long-term and substantial funding tailored to health financing advocacy needs.
- Inclusive collaboration: Involve CSOs in preparing national strategies, enhance information and data-sharing and strengthen ongoing collaborations across governance levels.
- CSO movement; support and further strengthen national and regional coalitions working on health financing advocacy and accountability
- Technical assistance and capacity building; provide training and workshops on technical concepts of health financing, (new) tools, trends, and opportunities for engagement.
- Community engagement and social inclusion: Support initiatives that promote community participation in health financing advocacy and accountability and monitoring of health service delivery.

The sessions presentations and group work outcomes are available on the health financing community of practice platform; <https://healthfinancingcop.africa/>

Community of Practice for CSO Engagement in Health Financing

Robinson Muigai - ICT Advisor, WACI Health

The Community of Practice is a one-stop shop for CSO practitioners in health financing advocacy and accountability to find relevant information such as training materials, case studies, good practices, details of fellow practitioners as well as opportunities for engagement.

The presentation emphasized the importance of user participation in keeping the website's information up to date. CSOs were encouraged to actively contribute details about their ongoing work and areas of expertise. This will ensure the website serves as a valuable and comprehensive resource for the entire JLA community



